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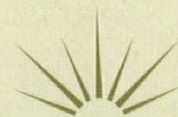
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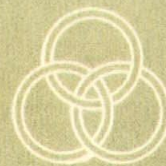
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Photo by Nic Lehoux Photography

Jigsaw, a house in Bethesda by David Jameson Architect.

ARCHITECTUREDC

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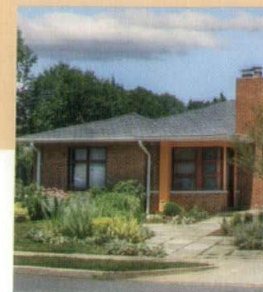
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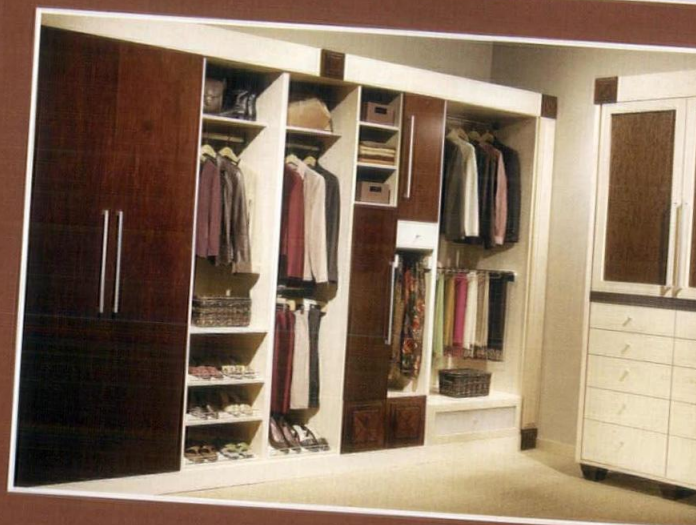
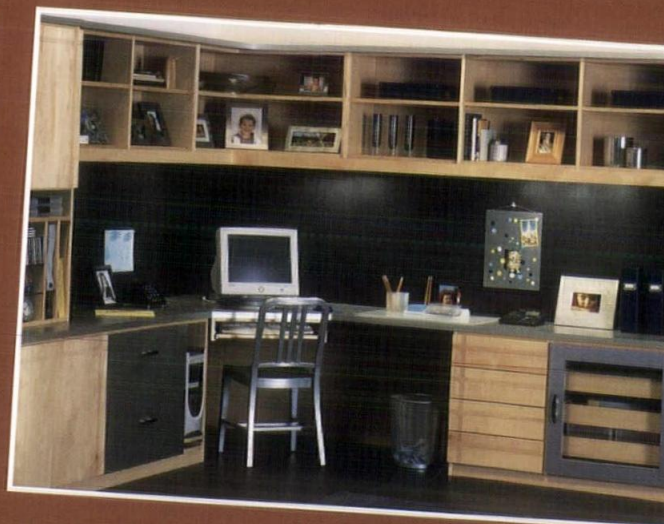
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ON THE COVER: Running Cedar, winner of a 2009 Washingtonian Residential Design Award; Richard Williams Architects. Photo © Paul Burk Photography



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AWARD-WINNING HOMES

David Hamilton



In this issue we present the winners of our annual Washingtonian Residential Design Competition, which AIA | DC has co-sponsored for 28 years. You'll notice some well-appointed houses and beautiful apartment buildings. All were designed when the economy was a lot stronger and building projects were plentiful.

Since the time these projects were designed, the economy has experienced one of its sharpest downturns in decades. Many people around the country have lost their homes or their jobs. A lot of people are suffering. For architects, building projects are much less plentiful, and many architects have been laid off from their firms. None of this is lost on AIA | DC—the chapter is helping laid-off architects to find new jobs, and AIA | DC's *pro bono* sister organization, the Washington Architectural Foundation, continues its charitable work for the local community.

Welcome!

In the current, weak economic climate, some might consider it unseemly to publish an issue that celebrates award-winning residential projects that originated in better economic times. I would argue it the other way—that showing the versatility of architects and the value they add in designing residential projects of all sizes and budgets is more important than ever. Our stellar jury for the competition—made up of **Henry Smith-Miller, AIA**, **Erica Broberg, AIA**, and **Kevin Wagstaff, AIA**—examined more than 100 submissions, and selected projects demonstrating this versatility, ranging from a very large, multi-family project designed by **Shalom Baranes Associates** to the tiny LEAFHouse, designed by the **University of Maryland School of Architecture** with architect **Amy Gardner, AIA** in the lead.

As always, our jurors came from outside the DC region, so as to bring a fresh and critical eye to the competition, and the entries they examined did not show the names of the submitting firms. Consequently, they (and we) had no idea until after their selections were finalized that they had given *four* of their awards to projects designed by **David Jameson, FAIA**. And those aren't the only projects by Jameson in this issue: before the jury convened, our editor, Martin Moeller, selected two other Jameson projects to be covered in the non-awards part of this issue. One of these, the .5/1.0 House, was selected in response to a call that the magazine put out for projects illustrating how local architects are responding to the weak economy and its effects on client finances. So, as it turns out, we are covering a total of six David Jameson projects in this issue.

Looking ahead, AIA | DC just announced a new competition, Unbuilt Washington, which will show projects both theoretical and yet to be built. All of the submissions will be on display at the annual DesignDC Conference, which will be held this year at the DC Convention Center July 14-16. The awards for this competition will be announced at the opening reception on July 14. We encourage all our architect members—as well as members of the public interested in the future of architecture—to attend. To learn more, just log on to www.aiadesigndc.org. And as always, your comments are welcome—send them to mfitch@aiadc.com.

Mary Fitch, AICP, Hon. AIA
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- EcoSmart Fire
- Venini ArtGlass/ArtLight

by Abby Davis

A new, eco-friendly product that can enhance a residence or commercial space is an **EcoSmart Fire** range. Available in a variety of shapes, sizes, and colors, there are three main types. The Designer Range, which is free-standing, requires no installation or building. The stainless steel Renovator Range can be incorporated into an existing closed-off fireplace or built into a feature wall. The more traditional Grate Range, a selection of fireplace inserts incorporating the EcoSmart burner, can be a fireplace feature or an open fire. Safety accessories are available for those with pets or small children, or for ranges intended for a public space. EcoSmart Fire is fueled using denatured ethanol, a renewable resource made from fermenting sugars (such as those found in sugarcane, beetroot, bananas and potatoes). When it burns, it produces clean emissions—just heat, steam, and a small amount of carbon dioxide. In fact, this product is so energy-efficient that it qualifies for a federal tax credit! Purchases can receive a 30 percent credit or up to \$1500 back. For more information on these products, visit www.ecosmartfire.com. They are available for purchase at Vastu (1829 14th Street, NW, Washington, DC; 202.234.8344 or www.vastudc.com). Prices for burner kits start at \$1600 and prices for ranges begin at \$2500.


Contemporaria in Cady's Alley, Georgetown, recently unveiled the **Venini ArtGlass/ArtLight** collection in its showroom. Venini, an Italian company, uses a difficult glass-blowing technique to create its unique pieces. The ArtLight collection includes floor, table, and ceiling lamps, as well as wall sconces, chandeliers, and sculptures. Colorful and delicate, the ArtGlass pieces could punch up any room. The Nastri Sospensione light fixture, pictured, is available in the store. It sells for \$4,960. The piece, made of metal and chrome, is also available as a wall sconce or a table lamp. Contemporaria is located at 3303 Cady's Alley, NW, Washington, DC; 202.338.0193 or www.contemporaria.com. 



Photo courtesy of Vastu

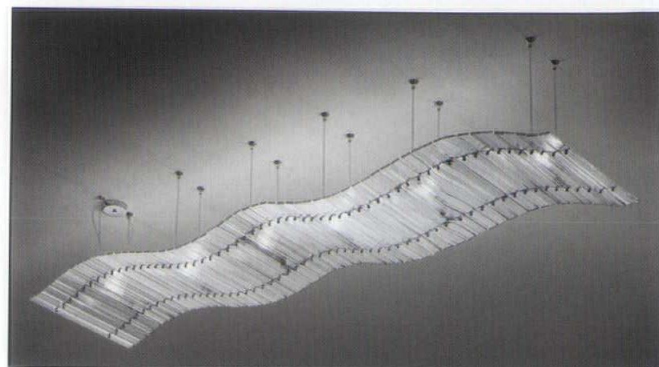
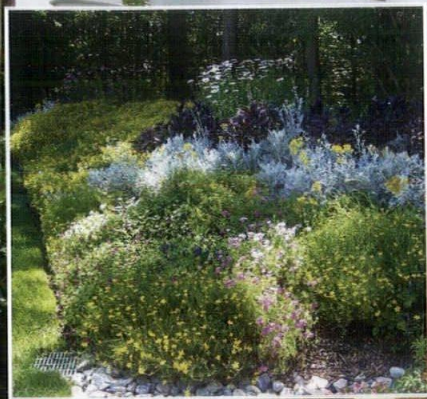


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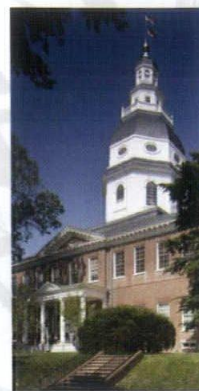
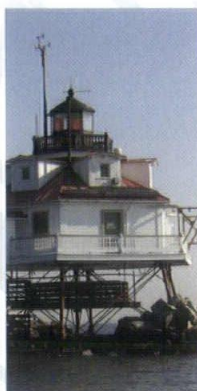
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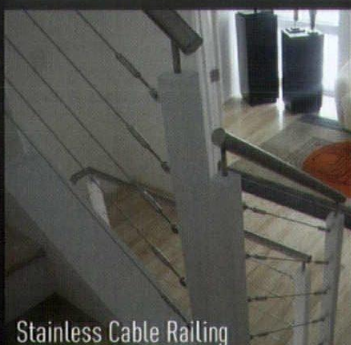
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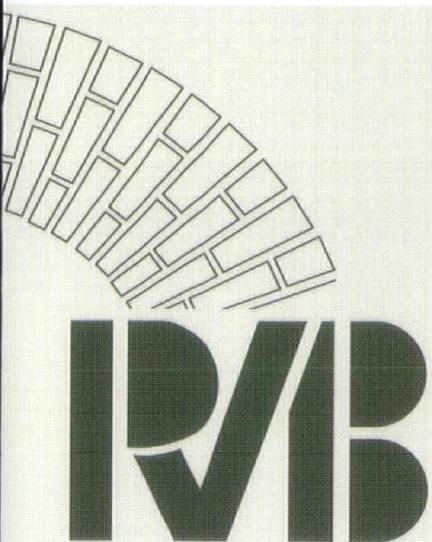
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Entrance to the Fort Scott
Residence, Arlington, Virginia,
by David Jameson Architect.

Washingtonian Residential Design Awards



Photo by Nic Lehoux Photography

The annual Washingtonian Residential Design Awards are co-sponsored by the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and *Washingtonian* magazine. The competition is open to registered architects of single- or multi-family residential projects in the Washington area, or second homes of Washington-area residents. This year's program drew 113 entries, and the jury selected 13 to receive awards.

While there is only one type of award in this competition, the jurors noted that, in their minds, the winners fit into five loose categories based on certain design characteristics. They labeled these categories Detailed, Vernacular, Historic, Current, and Innovative. The projects have been grouped accordingly on the following pages.

Jurors for the 2009 competition:

Erica Broberg, AIA, heads a small firm in East Hampton, New York, specializing in finely crafted houses and apartments. Her work has been featured in publications such as *Fine Homebuilding* and she has contributed a regular column on home design to the *East Hampton Star*.

Henry Smith-Miller, AIA, is a partner of Smith-Miller + Hawkinson Architects in New York City. He received a Master of Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania and was a Fulbright Scholar in Rome. He has held adjunct teaching positions at various architecture schools, including the Thomas Jefferson Professorship in Architecture at the University of Virginia and the Saarinen Chair at Yale University.

Kevin Wagstaff, AIA, is a partner at Perfido Weiskopf Wagstaff + Goettel in Pittsburgh. A graduate of Princeton University and the University of Virginia, he began his career in New York, working for Skidmore, Owings & Merrill and later Perkins & Will. He taught at the Savannah College of Art and Design before moving to Pittsburgh in 1993.



Running Cedar, northern Virginia,
by Richard Williams Architects.

Photo © Paul Burk Photography



Bathroom of Residence e2,
in Georgetown, by Robert M.
Gurney, FAIA, Architect.

Photo © Maxwell MacKenzie

DETAILED

by G. Martin Moeller, Jr., Assoc. AIA

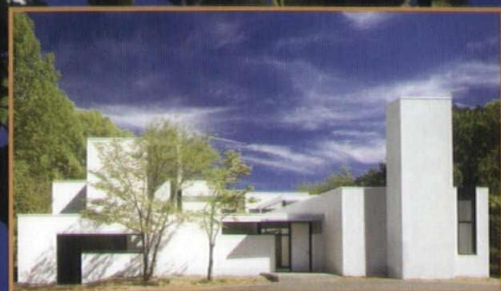
David Jameson Architect

Jigsaw

Bethesda, Maryland

Architectural Team: David Jameson, FAIA, principal;
Matthew Jarvis, project architect

Contractor: Steve Howard, GC with
A&F Applicators, Inc.



Photos by Nic Lehoux Photography



Photos by Nic Lehoux Photography

The inspiration for the name of the Jigsaw house is obvious after just one glance. With its interlocking forms and its interplay of opaque and transparent elements, the structure looks a bit like a three-dimensional puzzle. Yet despite this apparent complexity, the house's plan is surprisingly straightforward, comprising a series of simple, rectangular spaces that accommodate furniture logically and comfortably.

Because the house sits next to a busy street corner, architect **David Jameson, FAIA**, consciously designed it to be "introverted." The relatively few windows in the perimeter walls are carefully placed so as to protect occupants' privacy while admitting ample natural light and framing views to the landscape. At the center of the house is an open courtyard, complete with fireplace, which serves as the primary outdoor living area. In contrast to the mostly solid perimeter of the house, the courtyard's walls incorporate huge panes of glass that blur the distinction between indoor and outdoor spaces. To augment that effect, the architects treated the finished surfaces of the interior and exterior walls almost identically, with white stucco outside and matching white plaster inside.





Photos by Nic Lehoux Photography

David Jameson Architect

Fort Scott Residence

Arlington, Virginia

Architectural Team: David Jameson, FAIA, principal;
Ron Southwick, project architect

Contractor: Lifecraft, Inc.

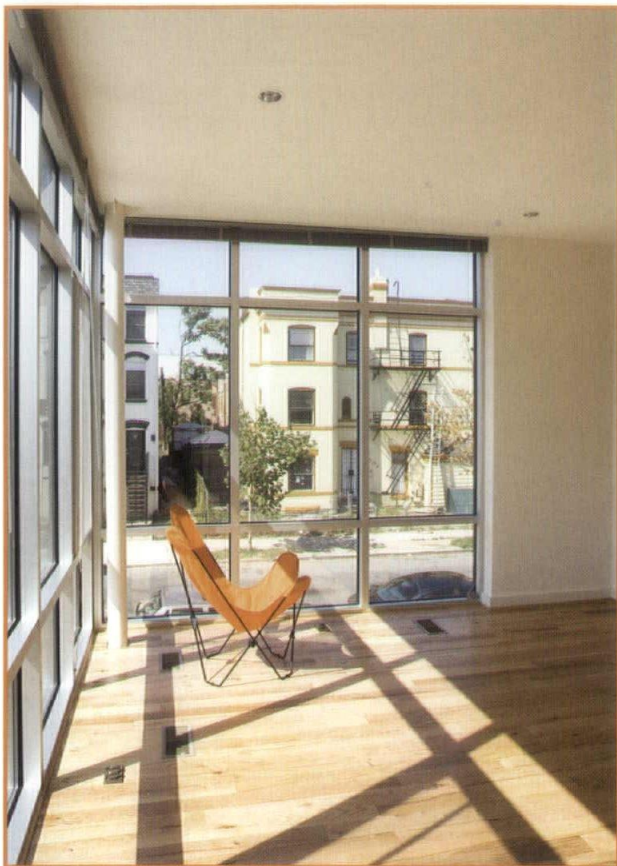
Named for its street, the Fort Scott Residence is the result of a complete renovation of an existing, one-story house and the addition of a second floor. The fundamental design challenge for architect **David Jameson, FAIA**, was to weave together the newly constructed components and the remnants of the original house—including interior masonry walls and terrazzo floors that the owners wanted to keep—into a single, coherent composition.

With that goal in mind, the architects conceived of the central part of the front façade as a series of “strata”—layers of parallel planes that express the horizontality of both the original house and the addition. Bracketing this main block are two stucco-covered towers, one containing an art studio above the garage, and the other a copious master dressing area above the guest room. In the upper corners of the dressing area and studio are light boxes—the word “windows” would not do them justice—that seem to capture great chunks of the sky, which thus becomes an integral element of the interior space. Seen from the outside at night, when lit from within, the glass corners glow like giant streetlamps.

“Simplicity [in architecture] can sometimes seem austere,” noted the jurors, but in both the Jigsaw and Fort Scott residences, thoughtful design and well-executed details yielded elegant, livable houses.



Photos by Nic Lehoux Photography



Photos by Robert Lautman

Suzane Reatig Architecture

506 O Street, NW

Washington, DC

Architectural Team: Wakako Tokunaga; Elizabeth Waites;
Kara O'Brian

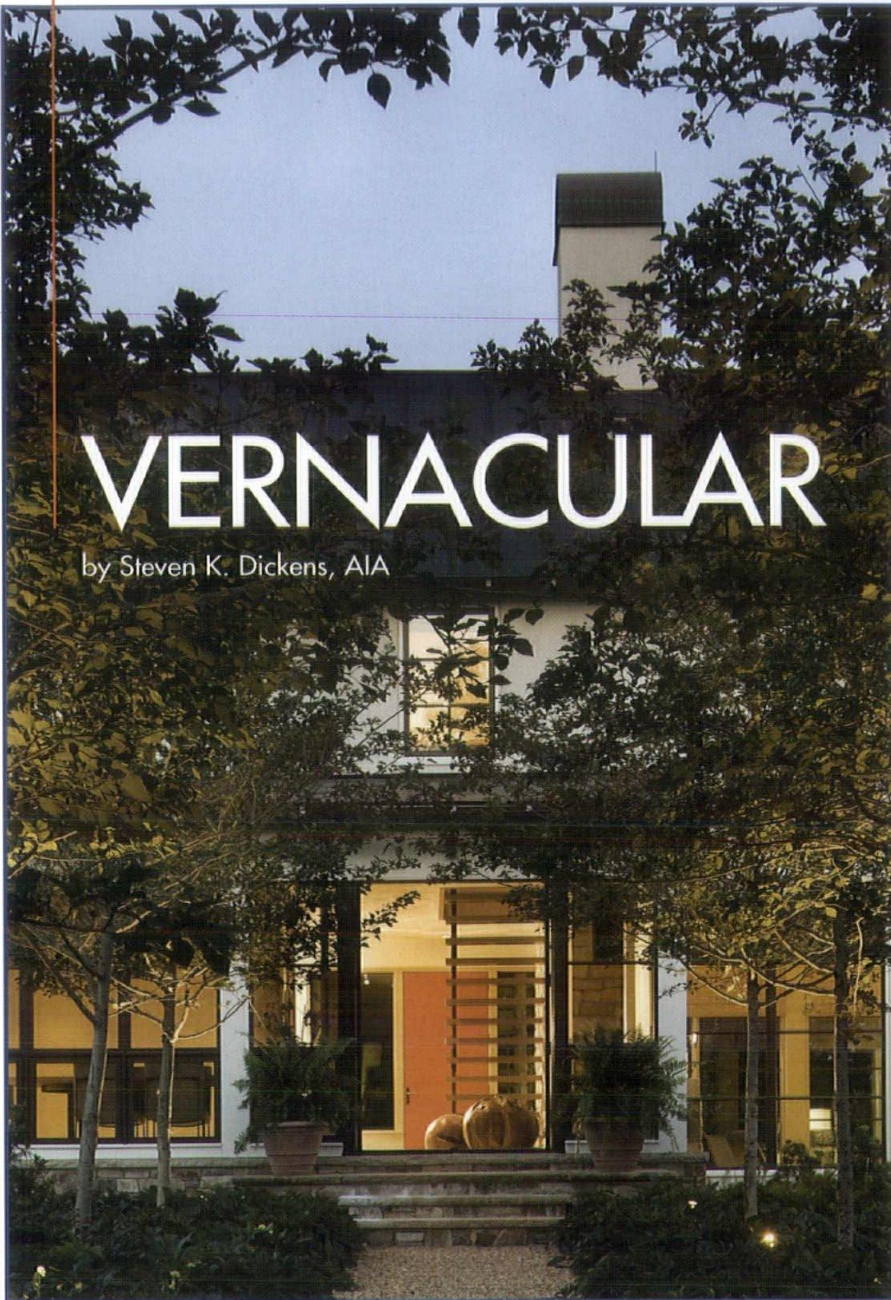
Contractor: Triad Construction Services, Inc.

Looking at a twilight photograph of 506 O Street, NW, one could easily mistake it for a small museum or other cultural facility, with its broad expanses of glass, interior walls washed with soft light, and sleek, paired staircases visible beyond the entry courtyard. Yet the building is actually a duplex townhouse, divided vertically to create two perfectly symmetrical units, each with a small living/kitchen space on the ground floor, and three bedrooms, a study, and two bathrooms on the upper floors. Each residence has three exposures, maximizing access to natural light, air circulation, and views.

The client for the project was the United House of Prayer for All People, a church founded by Charles M. "Sweet Daddy" Grace and formally incorporated in Washington in 1927. The duplex is one of several residential properties designed by **Suzane Reatig Architecture** for the church, which considers such projects to be a vital component of its community outreach efforts. The jury praised the modest O Street building for its "clarity and purity within a tight budget." 🏡



Photos by Robert Lautman



Photos © Paul Burk Photography



Photos © Paul Burk Photography

Richard Williams Architects

Running Cedar

Northern Virginia

Landscape Architecture: Arentz Landscape Architects, LLC

Interior Design: Solis Betancourt

Contractor: Castlerock Enterprises, Inc.

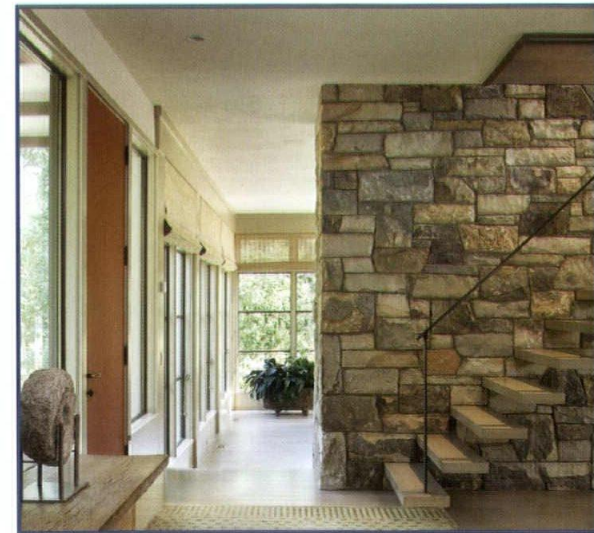
Stone Masonry/

Landscape Contractor: Ironwood, LLC

Juror Erica Broberg gave this new house on a rural escarpment overlooking the Rappahannock River the ultimate compliment: "I would really like to live here."

The client for the house was landscape architect Richard Arentz, with whom **Richard Williams, AIA**, has worked closely on several projects, along with Jose Solis-Betancourt, who was the interior designer. This house is the "result of an exceptionally close and fluid collaboration between the three principals of the design team," according to the architect. This integration shows: everything works together beautifully, and, moreover, lines between the three professionals' work are somewhat blurred. Landscape materials like fieldstone and raw wood appear in the architecture and furnishings; and architectural elements and furniture extend far into the landscape.

The buildings, upon first glance, seem completely vernacular. The basic gable and shed roof shapes, with tall chimneys, exposed rafter tails, and attic vents in the gable ends, are unmistakably drawn from the farmhouses that dot the region. But a closer look reveals a crispness of form and detailing that just as unmistakably signals modernity. The interiors are yet more modern, with spacious rooms, sharp details, and generous glass. One highlight is the spectacular stair to the master suite, made of smooth stone steps cantilevered from a rough-cut stone wall.



Photos © Paul Burk Photography



Photo © Maxwell MacKenzie



Photo © Maxwell MacKenzie

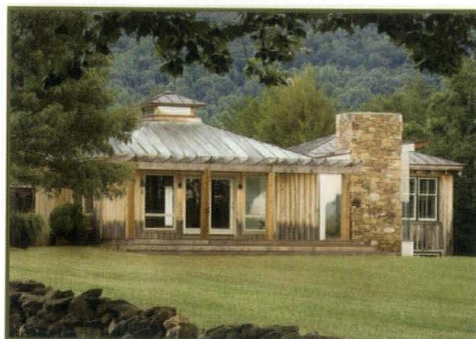
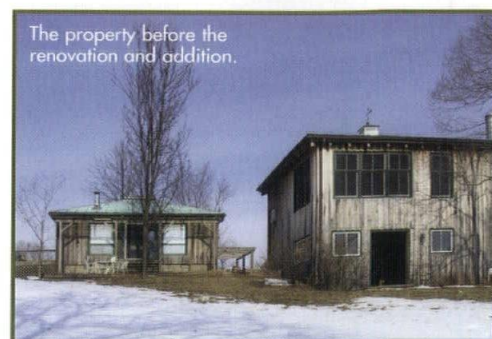


Photo © Maxwell MacKenzie



The property before the renovation and addition.

Photo by Meditch Murphey Architects

Meditch Murphey Architects

Rural Infill

Little Washington, Virginia

Architectural Team: John Dennis Murphey, AIA; Marcie Meditch, AIA; Jana Vander Goot

Contractor: Lee Levick

The two small, pre-existing vacation houses of the "Rural Infill" project were intentionally rustic in character, with barn-style wood siding and no heating or air-conditioning. But time had turned rustic into rundown, and a renewal was needed. Demolition and replacement would have been the easier route, but **Meditch Murphey Architects** guided their clients to "bring these old shacks back from the dead."

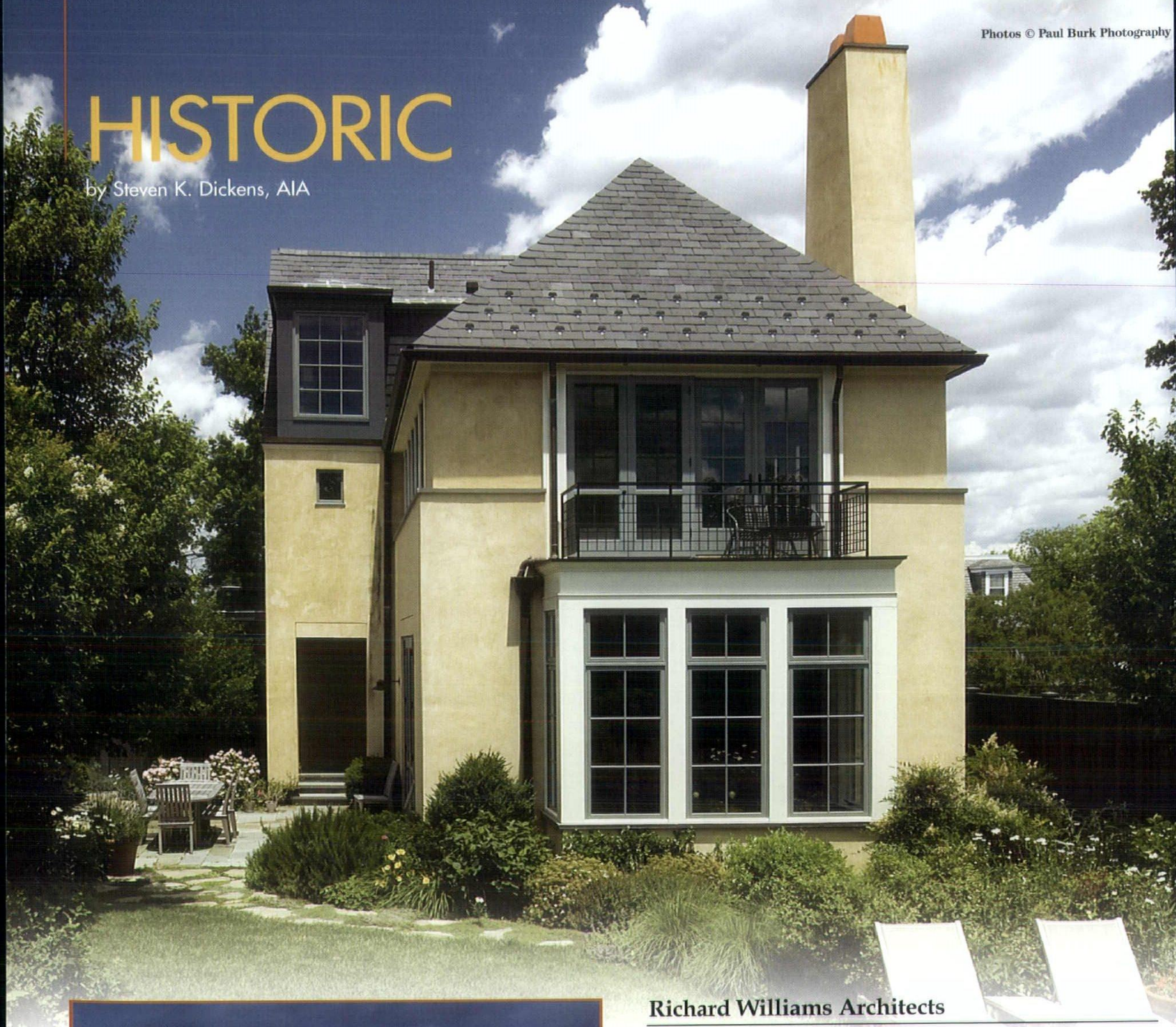
This was accomplished in two ways. Most obvious is the strikingly modern stucco-and-glass connection between the two older buildings, which juror Kevin Wagstaff described as "a simple piece of joinery" that creates a "whimsical, beautiful, and poetic assemblage." Anchored by a large stone chimney, its copper roof continues the slope of the taller pre-existing building's roof, but the new is clipped short to open to the southern light and views to the woods and a pond.

The original buildings were upgraded into air- and watertight structures, with a series of modest exterior modifications: a cupola lantern sprouted on the shorter building, while an incongruously equestrian cupola vanished from the taller building. A somewhat flimsy pergola on the south side of the shorter building, removed for the new connector, was seemingly reincarnated in more substantial form on the west side, actively reaching out into the landscape. 🍷

[This project was previously featured in the Spring 2009 issue of *ARCHITECTUREDC*.]

HISTORIC

by Steven K. Dickens, AIA



Photos © Paul Burk Photography

Richard Williams Architects

Urban Villa

Washington, DC

Contractor: Gibson Builders
Landscape Architecture: Yunghi Choi
Interior Design: Jane Cafritz Interiors

"This one jumped out at all of us [on the jury] as a skillful composition," said Kevin Wagstaff. "Precedents were clear"—in this case, houses designed by the early, evolutionary modernists in Europe, including members of the Wiener Werkstätte—"but so were the departures from the precedents."

The 4,200-square-foot residence by **Richard Williams Architects** is the easternmost of five new houses built on part of

the historic (c. 1794) Rosedale estate in Cleveland Park. Managing the bulk of the new house was one of the great achievements of the design. Its four stories are molded and nestled into the site so that it comes off as only a two-story house with attic and basement. Windows are grouped into vertical stacks or horizontal strips that play off the solidity of the stucco walls and heavy slate roof. The site plan was composed with equal care, maximizing the side and rear gardens while almost invisibly accommodating a driveway and trash enclosure.

The interior architecture, with its overtly modern lighting, focal red stucco wall, and steel cable stair railings, is decidedly less traditional than the exterior. On the main level, spaces are defined by millwork, floor level changes, and ceiling drops—all Modernist design devices—rather than traditional walls and doors. Yet, perhaps due to the dominance of the large, mullioned windows, the overall atmosphere inside remains transitional, easily accommodating an eclectic mix of furnishings and art.

[This project was previously featured in the Fall 2006 issue of *ARCHITECTUREDC*.]

David Jones Architects

Potomac River House

Washington, DC

Architectural Team: David Jones, principal;
Nick Bernel, project architect
Contractor: Mauck Zantinger & Associates

Juror Erica Broberg lauded this new house by **David Jones Architects** for its “tight little design and compact plan, exceptionally detailed and coherent,” citing the precepts of the increasingly well-known book *The Not So Big House*, by Sarah Susanka.

The glory of the site is a spectacular view of the Potomac River and Virginia beyond. Indeed, this is the *raison d’être* for the house: the owners loved the view so much that when their family outgrew their previous small bungalow, they chose to tear it down and build new on the same spot. The stacked porches capitalize on this singular, irreplaceable feature, while announcing the house’s rigorous Greek Revival design to the public. The employment of this style is complete: all exterior and interior elements are meticulously detailed in pattern-book compliance. White is the ubiquitous color, accented by black-green shutters on the exterior and offset by warm wood and brick floors inside.

The entrance is not in the front, but rather in the center of the west side, setting up a symmetrical main floor plan with the entrance/stairhall and kitchen in the middle, living room across the front, and family room across the rear. The living and family rooms are almost mirror images, each having a seating arrangement focused on a fireplace, a dining set opposite, and doors to the outside along the long wall. 🏡

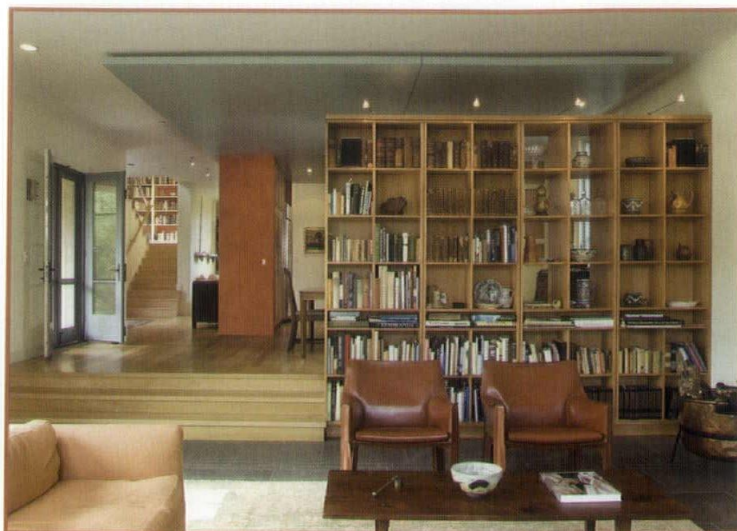


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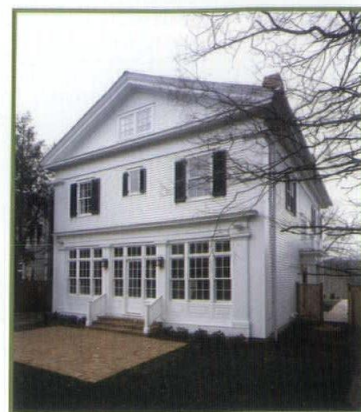


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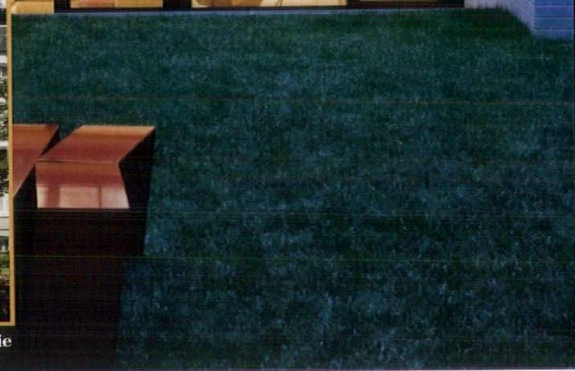
by G. Martin Moeller, Jr., Assoc. AIA



Photos © Maxwell MacKenzie



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Photos © Maxwell MacKenzie

Robert M. Gurney, FAIA, Architect

Residence e2

Washington, DC

Architectural Team: Robert M. Gurney, FAIA; Claire L. Andreas, project architect

Interior Designer: Therese Baron Gurney, ASID

Contractor: Prill Construction

"This one has a Victorian façade, and then—surprise!" said juror Erica Broberg, describing her reaction upon seeing the modern interior of this Georgetown row house built in 1876.

According to **Robert M. Gurney, FAIA**, the house appeared to be largely intact when he was hired to oversee its renovation, but the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems were insufficient and

some structural components showed signs of imminent failure. "The owners were attracted to the historical character of the property, but wanted a house with modern amenities, spaces for their expanding art collection, and a garden better connected to the interior spaces," said Gurney. For all these reasons, he decided to gut the interior, remove a visually discordant addition at the rear, and reconfigure the spaces of the house to meet his clients' needs.

Taking advantage of an unusual sliver of extra space running along the southern side of the property, the architect moved the main staircase there, thus freeing up the center of the house and allowing for more open living and dining rooms. At the rear, a new, steel-and-glass addition accommodates an up-to-date kitchen. The entire second floor is now devoted to the master bedroom suite, while two more bedrooms occupy the top floor.

With crisp white walls and recessed lighting throughout, complemented by dark-stained oak flooring and restored fireplaces and mantles, the house simultaneously serves as a serene backdrop for art and a warm, comfortable home.



Photos © Paul Warchol Photography

Robert M. Gurney, FAIA, Architect

Buisson Residence

Lake Anna, Virginia

Architectural Team: Robert M. Gurney, FAIA; Claire L. Andreas, project architect

Interior Designer: Therese Baron Gurney, ASID
Contractor: Loudin Building Systems

Overlooking Lake Anna in central Virginia, the Buisson Residence has a strongly theatrical quality to it. The house is rather like a stage, nature itself is the scenery, and the occupants are the actors whose movements are gently choreographed by the architecture.

Visitors approaching the house via the long driveway are greeted by a mostly opaque façade, shielding them from the view of the lake. As they pass through the front door and move toward the opposite wall, which is almost entirely glass, the view unfolds before them. To their left and right, the main living areas of the house are arranged in a linear fashion so that all spaces share in the vista. The second floor is enclosed in a copper-covered tube, focusing all views through the open ends, except for one spectacular, huge picture window in the home office. The sloping roof and canted rear wall of this tube help to shed water during heavy rains and deflect the fierce winds that can arise in this region.

The jurors called this house "a study in view and light," noting that "from each side it looks very different, appealing to different judges." Like a good play, it offers something for everyone.

Photos © Paul Warchol Photography

David Jameson Architect

Matryoshka House

Bethesda, Maryland

Architectural Team: David Jameson, FAIA, principal;
Matthew Jarvis, project architect

Contractor: Added Dimensions, Inc.

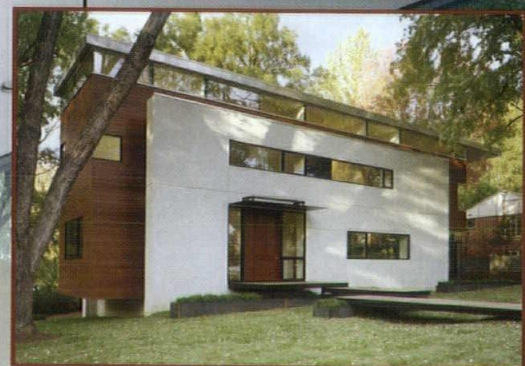
"Matryoshka," as in the traditional Russian nesting dolls? Exactly. This Bethesda house is organized in much the same way as the doll sets, consisting of a series of forms nested one inside the other. In this case, however, the forms vary not just in size, but also in materials, proportions, and degree of enclosure.

At the core of the house, dramatically suspended from the ceiling above the stairwell, is a meditation chamber that "acts as the physical and spiritual center of the project," according to architect **David Jameson, FAIA**. The meditation chamber is surrounded by a wooden structure that encases the main living spaces. This form, in turn, is bracketed by stucco walls "serving as a protective layer and grounding the house to the earth."

The main living area has floor-to-ceiling glass on three sides, yet retains a high degree of privacy by virtue of being sunken several feet and shielded by a stone retaining wall lining the adjacent patio. At the very top of the house, a continuous band of clerestory windows and a thin, flat roof lined with terne-coated stainless steel form an elegant crown that reflects sunlight by day and glows warmly at night.



Photos © Paul Warchol Photography



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David Jameson Architect

BTR

Bethesda, Maryland

Architectural Team: David Jameson, FAIA, principal;
Christopher Cabacar, project architect
Contractor: Owner

David Jameson, FAIA, refuses to be intimidated by something as mundane as gravity. For the new wing of this Bethesda house, he managed to create a vast ground-level living space that is virtually column-free and surrounded by glass, notwithstanding the fact that

there are two more floors—sheathed in richly textured copper—directly above it. Moreover, one end of the copper-clad box containing a two-story-high screened porch is audaciously cantilevered beyond the glass wall below. At certain times of day, the metallic form appears to be hovering inexplicably in mid-air. The resulting spacious, nearly transparent ground floor easily accommodates a variety of activities, from children's playtime to elegant dinner parties for 50 people.

The new wing, dubbed the "Garden Pavilion," complements an adjacent, gray stucco structure that is actually a renovation of an existing split-level, neo-colonial house. The interior of this portion is composed of discrete rooms, in marked contrast to the open-plan spaces in the addition. Consistent details and common materials unify the old and new portions of the house, which are connected by a narrow circulation and service spine. 🏡

INNOVATIVE

by Steven K. Dickens, AIA

Amy E. Gardner, AIA, LEED® AP

LEAFHouse

College Park, Maryland

Design Team: LEAFHouse Team, University of Maryland, School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation & A. James Clark School of Engineering

Faculty Advisers: Amy E. Gardner, AIA, LEED® AP; Dr. Kaye Brubaker; Julie Gabrielli, NCARB, LEED® AP; Mark McInturff, FAIA

For its Solar Decathlon, held every two years, the U.S. Department of Energy invites twenty university teams from around the world to compete in the creation of the most attractive and energy-efficient solar-powered, 800-square-foot house. These houses are assembled on the National Mall and judged. In the 2007 Decathlon, the hometown team from the **University of Maryland** took second place. This fact was not revealed to the Washingtonian Awards jurors, but they, too, put the LEAF ("Leading Everyone to an Abundant Future") House in the winners' circle. Henry Smith-Miller summarized the jury's reaction, saying, "This project is about the future of the house."

The LEAFHouse design addresses numerous issues ranging from insulation to onsite power production, wastewater to interior air quality, and drainwater heat recovery to stormwater reuse for irrigation. One of the most distinctive innovations is a liquid desiccant wall, in which highly absorptive calcium chloride sucks the humidity out of the air.

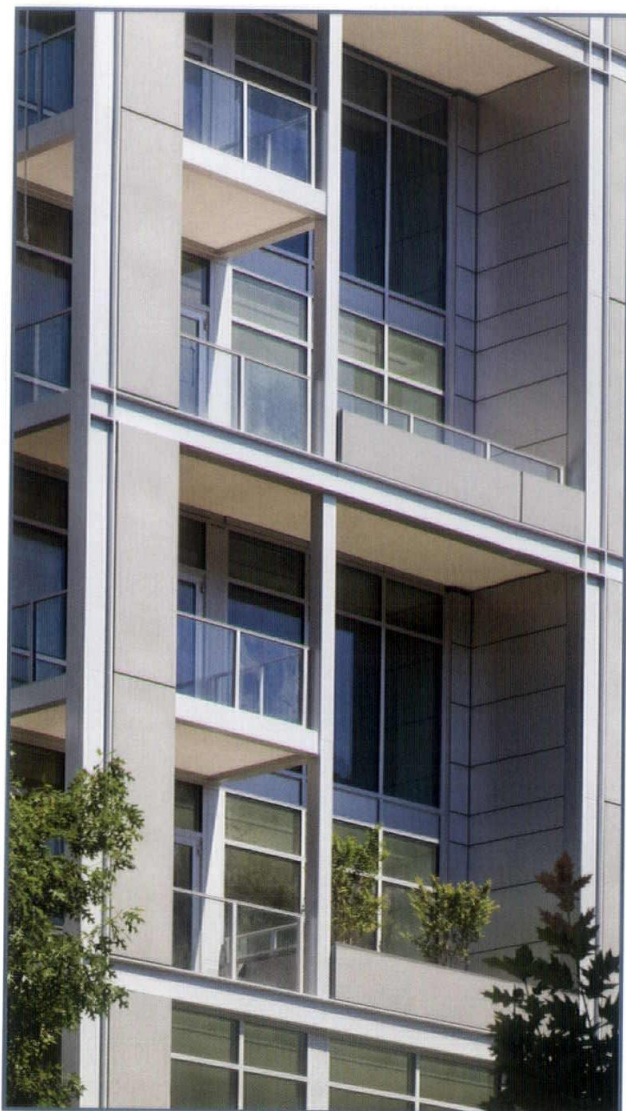
It's possible, when reading about such technical achievements, to lose sight of other aspects of the LEAFHouse that are critical to its success. The competition expressly called for designs that are aesthetically pleasing and comfortable. The Maryland team responded with a house notable for its attractive materials, careful composition, and clever detailing, as seen in the tree-trunk kitchen countertop, louvered doors, and immaculately crafted structural spine running along the peak of the roof.

After the Decathlon, the house was dismantled and reassembled on a permanent site in College Park.

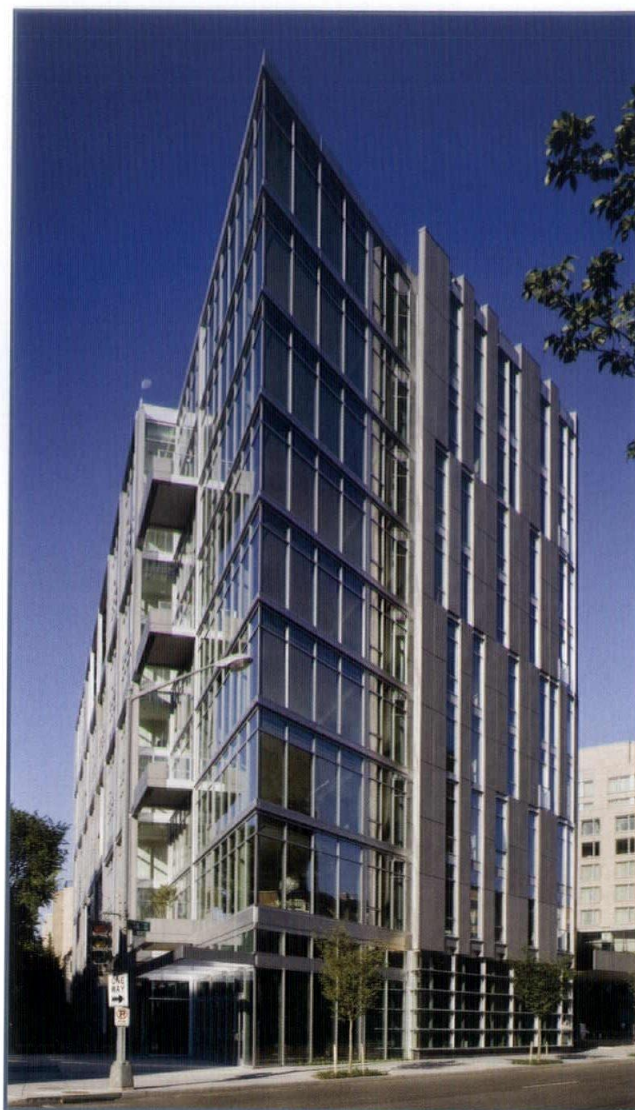


Photo © Jim Tetro Photography

Photo by Kenneth M. Wyner Photography Inc.



Photos © Maxwell MacKenzie



Photos © Maxwell MacKenzie

Shalom Baranes Associates, PC

22 West Condominiums

Washington, DC

Architectural Team: Robert Sponseller, AIA, design principal; John Nammack, AIA, and Barry Habib, AIA, project managers; Juan Tampe, project architect; Joseph Boyette, AIA; Chris Hoyt, AIA; Grace Kang; Dan Friedman; Xin Wang

Landscape Architects: Oculus

Contractor: Bovis Lend Lease, Inc.

Familiar to *ARCHITECTUREDC* readers as a recipient of a 2008 Chapter Award [see the Fall 2008 issue], this ultra-high-end condominium building in the West End

has won another award for its architects, **Shalom Baranes Associates, PC**.

The Washingtonian jury, like the Chapter Awards jury before it, cited the building's refined and distinctive curtain walls, the unexpected yet successful accommodation of a gas station in the design, and the incorporation of greenery into the façades. However, as one might expect for a residential design competition, the Washingtonian Awards judges also looked closely at the floor plans of individual units, and found much to praise in the generously proportioned, glass-walled layouts. Even the elevator lobbies are pushed to the outside wall, and therefore have natural light and views, an unusual design move that promotes livability.

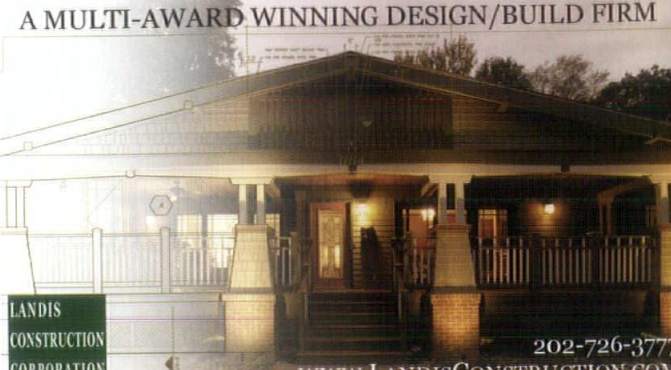
Juror Henry Smith-Miller noted that, in some respects, 22 West's innovation is the opposite of that represented by the LEAFHouse. Its sustainability credentials, for instance, derive from its density rather than from innovative systems. "Building high-rise is effectively green," he commented. The planters that dot the New Hampshire Avenue façade on alternating floor levels reflect "a new way of putting people together in a tall building," making density more palatable. 🌿



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Photo by Brandon We

Lofty Ambitions:

Three Apartments Offer Models for Urban Living

by Janet B. Rankin

Anyone looking for an apartment in Washington can't help but come across the term "loft" in his or her search. No longer does this term refer solely to expansive, partition-less flats in abandoned industrial buildings. Washington seems to have developed its own definition of the term, using the word to describe dwellings with double-height spaces, open floor plans, large windows, and exposed mechanical systems.

In an ever-widening field of contenders, what makes a particular loft residence stand out? Whether a speculative venture or a customized space for a specific owner, a great loft reveals the influence of the clients and their attention to the detail of the design. Three apartments, each in a vibrant Washington neighborhood, eloquently tell this story.

Doubling Up

In Adams Morgan, owner and architect **Steven L. Spurlock, AIA, LEED® AP**, of **Wnuk Spurlock Architecture**, and his wife Karin Strydom skillfully converted two mirror-image apartments into a single unit. Their building, the Lofts at Adams Morgan, was designed by Eric Colbert &

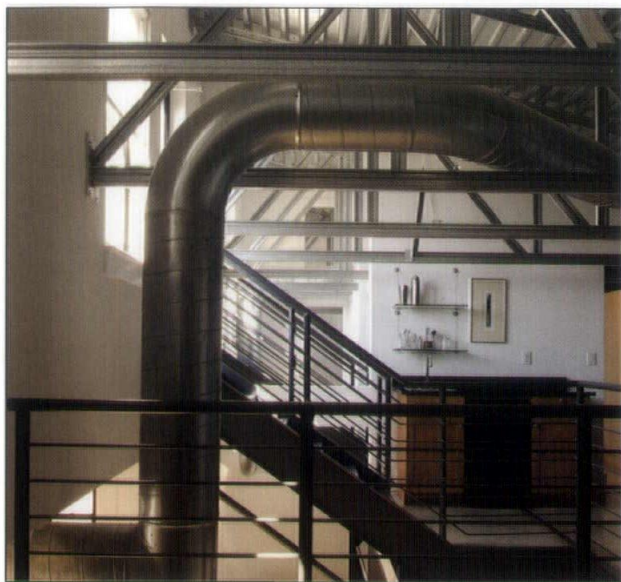
Associates and completed in 2002. The location of the building, paralleling active 18th Street, embodies city living.

The couple originally bought one unit in late 2004. They were drawn to the building by the availability of a large, two-story apartment with access to outdoor space—in this case, a roof terrace. Steven and Karin lived in the apartment in its original configuration for two years, greatly enjoying the building and neighborhood, but wishing they could have a larger home with similar amenities. When the adjacent apartment—also with a connecting roof deck—became available in 2007, the couple bought the second unit and embarked on a seven-month renovation.

In their original configuration, each apartment had an open living space on the entry level's west side, with a small bedroom, kitchen, and bathroom tucked under a larger, loft-like bedroom and bath on the east. Open-tread, metal stairs in each unit led to the roof deck from the second level.

The concept for the renovation was simple: join the expansive volumes of the living spaces, anchoring both

Main living space
Spurlock/Strydom



Upper level of the Spurlock/Strydom loft.

Photo by Brandon Webster



Bathroom in the Spurlock/Strydom loft.

Photo by Brandon Webster

with an open kitchen spanning the two original units, and retain the small, internal rooms on the lower floor while preserving the loft feel of the upper rooms. What makes the project so successful is the thoughtful manner in which the original space was customized to the owner's needs, as well as the refined integration of the existing construction into the final design.

The most significant interventions took place in the "new" unit, where the architect demolished the connecting stair and reconfigured both the upper and lower floors. Kitchens in both units were removed, but utility connections—including the sink location—were retained. The configuration of the bathrooms on the lower floors remained intact, too.

Spurlock sees the apartment as a "large container," with well-defined, inserted elements that are differentiated from the white drywall enclosure. On the entry level, the new living and dining areas are anchored by an open kitchen, lined with cabinetry that is "like a piece of furniture." Appliances are concealed behind planes of dark-stained, rift-cut oak, unbroken except for the range and its hood.

A fireplace and a media cabinet are encased within the floating island that separates the kitchen from the living area. Freestanding furniture is subtle and classic in design; the modern pieces are accentuated by artworks from the couple's collection, including three pieces by Sam Gilliam.

On the upper level, the space is divided along the lines of the original apartments, with a library/music room adjacent to a reconfigured master suite. Here, new furniture-like elements were finished in maple plywood to differentiate them from the drywall wrapper. The elements of the new enclosures respond sympathetically to the strong rhythm of the existing, exposed metal roof trusses. In the bathroom, fixtures, lighting, and millwork were all modulated to accommodate the truss penetrations.

Sustainable materials were used throughout, including bamboo flooring, quartz-and-resin composite countertops, low-VOC coatings, Energy Star®-rated appliances, and high-efficiency plumbing fixtures.

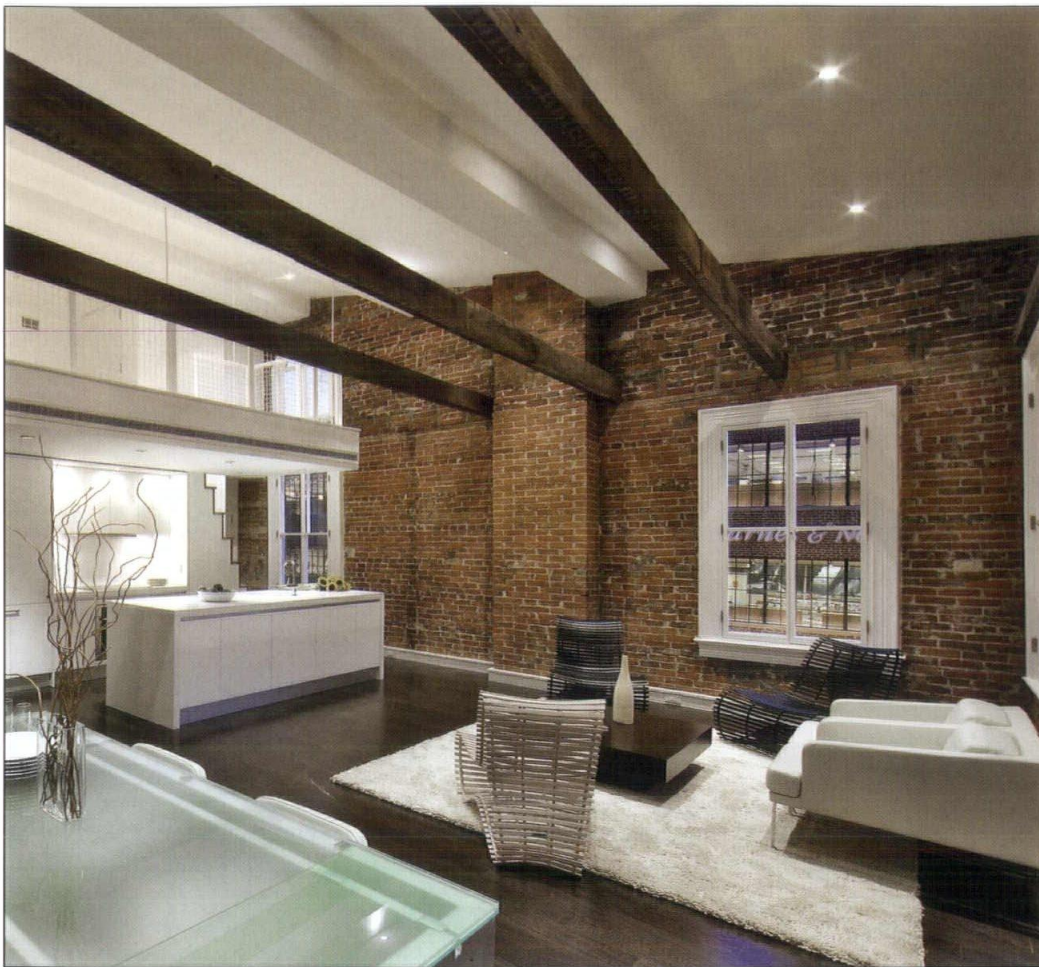
Two Apartments for One Pair of Clients

Two new loft apartments in historic Georgetown also owe their inspiration to their owners. In this case, however, the owners were not slated to be the residents; rather, developer Anthony Lanier, president of EastBanc, Inc., and his wife Isabel were the genesis for these two projects in different buildings by different architects. Lanier's personal commitment to creating vitality in Washington neighborhoods flows from the desire not only to increase commercial enterprise, but also to encourage people to live in the city.

Perhaps as a result of his European background, Lanier has been an active pioneer in bringing this mix of uses to Georgetown, with many thriving endeavors to his credit. The impetus for both of these apartments was the conversion of vacant shell buildings for potential retail tenants. Like a three-dimensional puzzle, retail and residential are skillfully intertwined, jointly meeting the social and economic goals set for the projects.

At the pedestrian level, the southeast corner of M and Thomas Jefferson Streets glitters with the bright lights and colorful wares of Juicy Couture. Less visible is the third floor apartment designed by **George Gordon Architects**, with a team that includes the firm's owner, project architect **Gloria Tseng Fischer**, and designer **Lucia Tang**. Gordon describes the trend towards including residential units above commercial spaces as an old paradigm that is returning to popularity as owners strive to make every inch of space economically viable. Of this trend, he says, "the future is the past."

The corner site, once home to the Birch Funeral Home, is made up of three buildings, constructed in the mid-1800s and recorded in the Historic American Buildings Survey. The stable/garage to the rear is the only late 19th-century structure of its kind remaining in the Georgetown waterfront area. The building had stood empty for almost three years when EastBanc approached George Gordon to renovate the shell. The scope of work was a



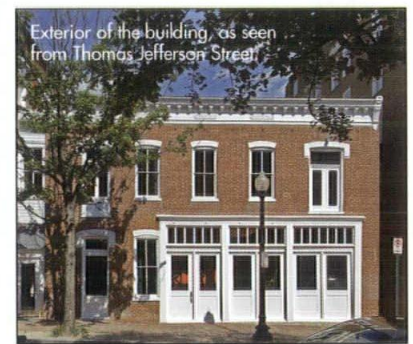
Main living space of Georgetown loft by George Gordon Architects.

Photo by Kenneth M. Wyner Photography Inc.



Kitchen, with living area beyond.

Photo by Kenneth M. Wyner Photography Inc.



Exterior of the building, as seen from Thomas Jefferson Street.

Photo by Kenneth M. Wyner Photography Inc.

familiar one: excavate the basement, upgrade the utilities, and create a “white box” for a prospective tenant build-out. The retail tenant, Juicy Couture, signed in the middle of the process, leaving the remaining space available for residential use.

Accessed by stair or elevator from Thomas Jefferson Street, the “front door” of the residence is on the third level, across a rooftop terrace slated to become a green roof. The space within contains a living area, bedroom, bath and loft; although small, the space feels generous. The historic fabric—brick walls, wood joists and restored windows—is a backdrop for the white structure that has been inserted into the existing envelope. The smooth, contemporary surfaces of the new construction contain the private spaces and new systems that support the home’s function.

Gordon cites Isabel Lanier as a driving force behind the contemporary features, citing his clients as “metropolitan,” as well as involved, engaged, and willing to do what it takes to make a successful project. Another important partnership developed with the kitchen designer/manufacturer, Pedini. The placement of the kitchen element and the overhanging loft space was critical in development of the design, and the detailing of the white lacquer volume is a focal point in the room. Millwork in the main bathroom is also provided by Pedini.

Commitment to restoration of the original structure is also apparent. Exterior windows were restored, rather than replaced, and enhanced with a second window on the interior to mitigate noise from the street and enhance thermal performance. The residential renovation was completed in September of 2008.

A few blocks to the north, on Wisconsin Avenue, a similar program inspired another contemporary apartment interior. Designed by **Barnes Vanze Architects**, the three-part project began almost five years ago. The initial component was to restore the circa-1895 commercial and residential row building that faces the street, adding elements that would attract a retail user. Only 22 feet wide and 37 feet deep, the structure did not offer the space to support a major tenant; the lot however, stretched 220 feet back into the alley, and was bounded by the party walls of the adjoining buildings.

The project architect, the late **Stephen Schottler**, devised a concept to maximize the site’s use. The solution maintains the existing historic building, infilling new commercial space in the lot behind. A glass bridge connects the historic structure to the new construction. Unlike the M Street building, this project was completed before the retail tenant—Puma—was in place.

On the alley front, a new brick structure, which is stylistically sensitive to the surrounding building, houses an apartment on its second and third floors. In the development of residential components in narrow, commercial spaces, providing appropriate access is paramount. Lacking the width to develop a stair from the street front, the architects used the alley to create the approach. A small elevator and stair lobby are used to gain entrance to both the rear of the store and the residential entry on the second level.

Although the building exterior was designed to meet the stringent approval of the Old Georgetown Board’s contextual review, the interior space is in no way traditional. Spirited back-and-forth discussion between designer and client resulted in a



Interiors of the Georgetown apartment
by Barnes Vanze Architects.

Photos © Hoachlander Davis Photography, LLC.



Photos © Hoachlander Davis Photography, LLC.

bold color palette, and the insertion of trapezoidal geometries into the narrow, rectangular space.

The kitchen is again a focal point for the living space, with surfaces covered in metal— both white-painted and stainless steel. The cooktop, on an angle to the rest of the millwork, bridges from counter to counter. Poured concrete floors ground the open volume. Two bedrooms and bathrooms on the third floor make good use of the compact space. A stair gains access to a roof deck, which takes advantage of panoramic views of Washington.

The success of each of these residences goes far beyond satisfying the owners and residents. Each skillfully reinterprets the concept of "loft," and contributes to the reinvigoration of Washington's historic neighborhoods. Catalysts for life and vitality, these three indeed offer models for urban living. 🏡



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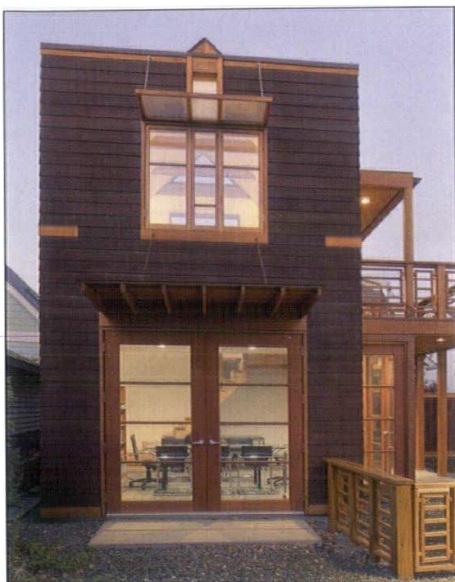


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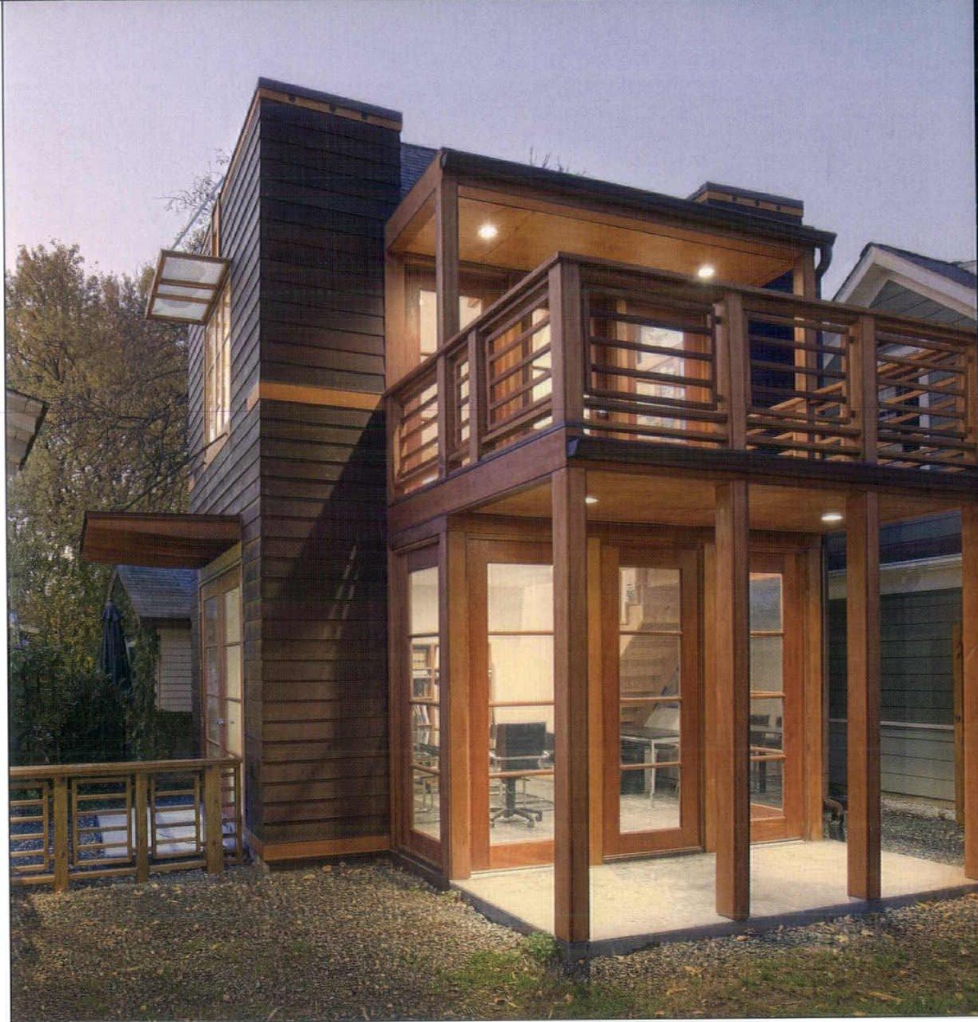


Photo by Jeffrey Sauers/Commercial Photographics

Views of the studio outbuilding by Temple Washington, AIA. The photo at lower left shows the studio in the background, with two smaller outbuildings in the foreground.

Outbuildings:

Reinventing the Architecture of the Back Yard

by Steven K. Dickens, AIA

After a long period during which garages ceased to be detached and “potting sheds” were downscaled to plastic miniature barns available at big-box stores, the outbuilding is making a comeback.

There’s a sense, perhaps, that a certain specialness was sacrificed when rooms like the garage, studio, library, guest suite, or even simple storage sheds were amalgamated with the principal house. With detachment come new perspectives, figuratively and literally.

Moreover, elemental design opportunities were lost: the ability to use multiple structures to create more complex configurations on one’s property, to frame outdoor spaces, and to establish an architectural “conversation” among the various structures. Nowadays, however, it seems that architects and owners—and even developers—are

rediscovering the outbuilding.

The studio outbuilding of **Temple Washington, AIA**, came about, in fact, because of the sudden appearance of *three* sizable outbuildings across his backyard fence, combined with the removal of two mature trees. Almost overnight, his backyard ceased to be shady or private. At the same time, he acknowledged that his detached garage had rotted out beyond repair, and the porch of the main house, a 1920s Sears mail-order bungalow, needed serious repairs, too.

The studio which replaced the garage was designed as a vertical counterpoint to the horizontal, one-story bungalow, but the materials used on the studio match those of the rehabilitated porch. “It sets up a dialogue,” explains Washington. Another dialogue emerges in the

studio tower itself, which has a duality of façades. The street-facing façade is symmetrical, with a dominance of primary shapes and contrasting material colors. This relatively formal façade contrasts with the side facing the garden, which is more informal and heavily glazed.

The two-story studio—meeting room/library below, drawing room above—and two small garden sheds were positioned to regain privacy, while new trees have been planted to restore shadiness. The three outbuildings, plus the rear façade of the house, clearly define a garden room, as yet just lawn, but with plans for the future.

Washington, whose firm **WHA Associates** is responsible for some of the higher-end condominium buildings in the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor, says that “part of me really wanted something strikingly modern.” But one doesn’t become a prominent architect in Arlington without learning a great deal about how to be sensitive to the neighbors. The public-comment-heavy process known as the “Arlington Way” requires it. Moreover, Washington acknowledges that he was drawn to the neighborhood, Lyon Village, because it felt like an old-fashioned southern town. One might be tempted call the result a compromise, but it certainly doesn’t feel that way. It unmistakably announces, “Architecture here!,” yet it’s not the slightest bit impolite or out of context.

Robert Gurney, FAIA, needs no introduction to readers of **ARCHITECTUREDC**. A perennial

Washingtonian Award winner, his work has graced many a page of this publication. Over the years, he notes, a number of his commissions have included outbuildings. Typically, as is the case in the Chevy Chase project shown here, the program is quite mundane: a building for storage of bicycles and yardwork implements that also strategically blocks the view of the across-the-fence neighbor.

Gurney did a substantial renovation and addition to the main house, with his signature complex geometries and modern, asymmetrical compositions. The pavilion uses the same material palette as the house, but in no way is it an exercise in miniaturization. Quite the opposite: the pavilion’s massing could not be simpler or more vernacular.

Gurney sees the pavilion foremost in its role as the object of the view from the main house, saying, “It was a way to end the garden with a texture.” The “texture” is a dry-stacked stone wall, which is capped by a continuous steel channel. The channel, painted dark, creates a crisp separation between the stone wall and copper roof. The roof is a simple standing-seam surface, but transitions to large-scale shingles (still copper) when it turns the corner to the gable at the side. The slatted mahogany doors—maneuver that lawnmower carefully, these doors are way too nice to bang up!—add a third material element, and, at night, introduce a soft glow.

If one’s eyes were fuzzed, one might think the pavilion were an old farm building, swallowed up by suburban

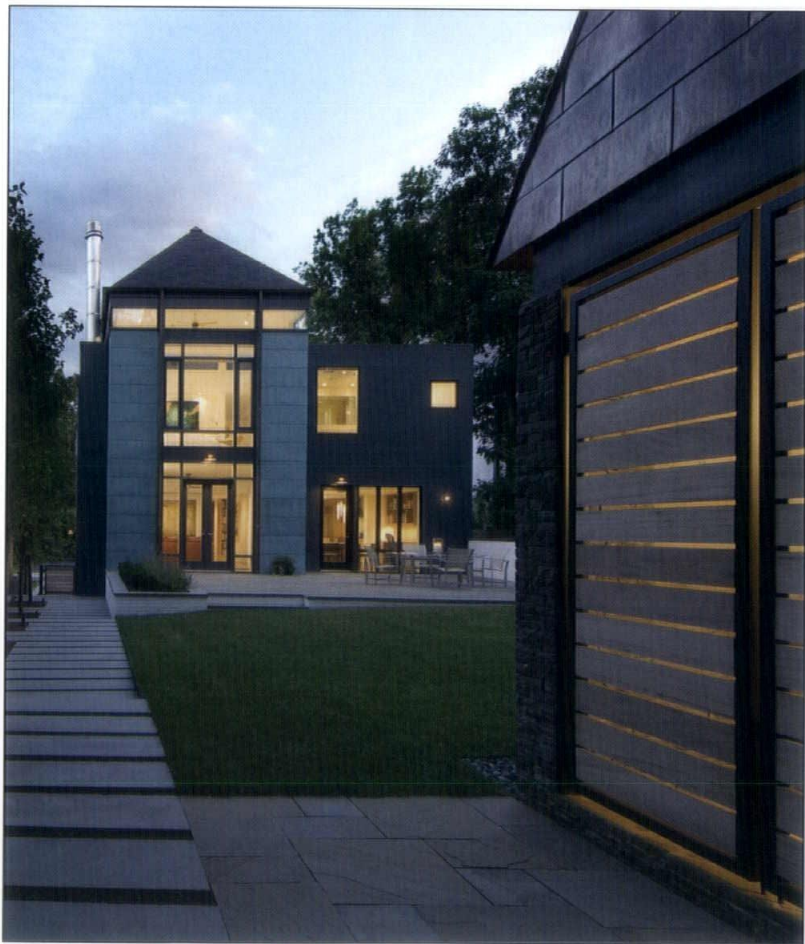


Photo © Maxwell MacKenzie



Garden pavilion of the Peterson Residence.

Photo © Maxwell MacKenzie



Photo © Maxwell MacKenzie

Garden pavilion of the Peterson Residence, by Robert M. Gurney, FAIA, with the main house in the background.

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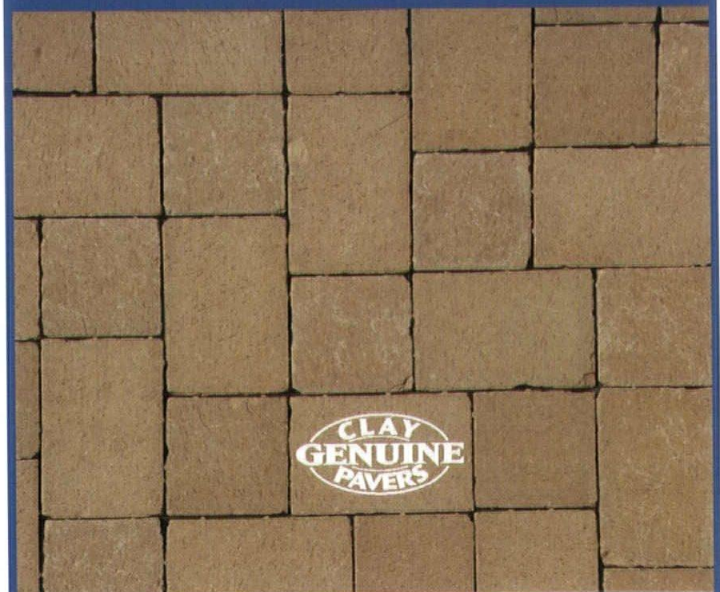
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If most of the Washingtonian winners are novels (some of them quite lengthy), then Temple Washington's studio and Robert Gurney's garden pavilion are short stories. In that context, the "Tea House" project by **David Jameson, FAIA**, is clearly a poem.

The dramatic big move in the design is the creation of a discrete glass room, not anchored to the ground but suspended from above like a lantern. To the architecture buff, it's perhaps the next step in the evolution of the Glass House—from Philip Johnson's house in New Canaan, Connecticut (1949), solidly rooted to the earth, to Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House in Plano, Illinois (1951), raised on a few posts, to this design for a Tea House, entirely open below.

Set in the rear yard of a single-family house in Chevy Chase, the Tea House is in fact intended as a garden room for tea, but also to serve as a stage for the family's musical recitals and a meditation space, ennobling and lending gravity to each of these functions. The user is intended, in the words of the architect, to occupy the structure "as a performer with a sense of otherworldliness..."

Entrance to the Tea House is deliberately indirect. From the lawn, one will step up onto a raised platform, with crunching gravel underfoot. One's route is directed through a bamboo grove where a multiplicity of pathway choices creates a certain amount of disorientation, while requiring a degree of concentration. One meanders all the way around the glass building to the one opaque element, a thick wood door.

Steps of steel and concrete rise toward the door, but they do not touch the Tea House. To enter one must step over the gap. Once inside the glass room, one is both protected and exposed. Jameson characterizes this choreography as "cleansing," preparing one for meditation, musical performance, or just an exchange of higher thoughts over tea.

An interesting aspect of this is that the clients didn't come to Jameson asking for a poetic "Tea House," nor indeed any outbuilding at all. They came as more typical clients, looking for advice on how to make their Arts and Crafts-style house work better for their needs. In discussions with Jameson, the notion of "suspension" came up repeatedly: the clients—like many Washingtonians, one has to think—needed a way to suspend time, thought, and emotion.

Jameson and the clients realized that the house didn't need renovations or an addition. Rather, it needed a place of "suspension." The Tea House was thus born, and, as the design progressed, the word "suspension" morphed from metaphorical to structural. The project is scheduled for construction in the near future. 🏡

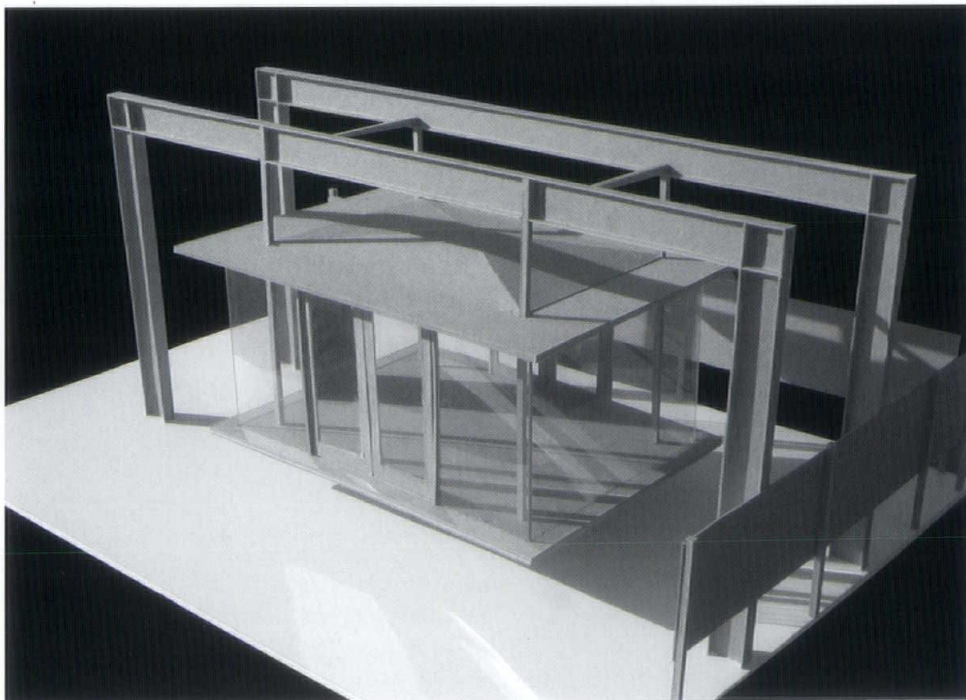


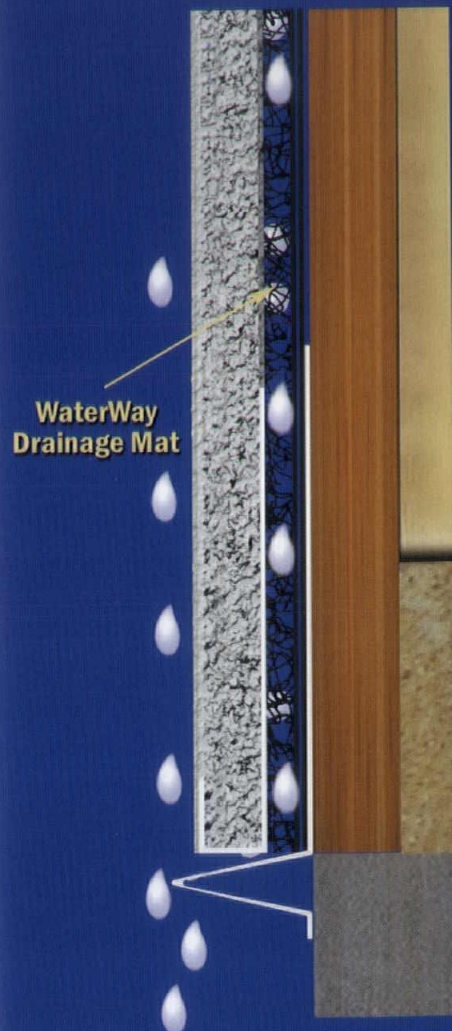
Photo of the model of the Tea House.

Courtesy of David Jameson Architect

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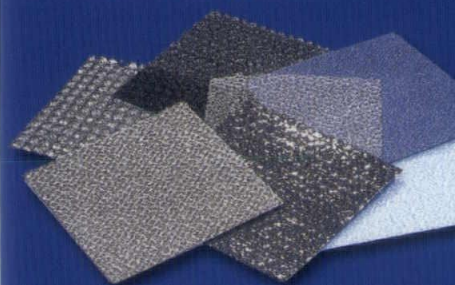
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A Green Approach:

Bigger Isn't Always Better by Sarah Smith

Front of the
Arlington, Virginia,
house after renovation.

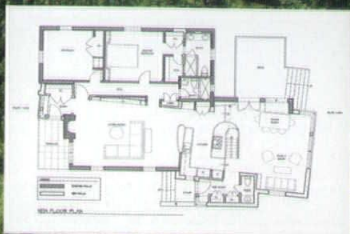
The firm of Ossolinski Architects was recently hired by clients whose commitment to conservation and modest living was seemingly in conflict with their desire for a larger living space. *Should we tear the house down and rebuild? Should we add a second floor?*, were their troubled queries, no doubt influenced by their neighbors' tendency to tear down similarly small houses and replace them with mammoth tract-mansions.

In support of their clients' wishes for a green renovation, the architects made two fundamental suggestions that ultimately governed the project: first, that the owners re-use the existing house, and second, that they build no more than what was absolutely necessary. While the original house was very modest—typical of Washington's post-war suburban neighborhoods—the resulting renovation was also quite modest, and for this reason, also inherently

green. But the architects went above and beyond this to create a truly sustainable home.

Conserving materials by re-using an existing structure is a simple and often overlooked green approach. In this case, Ossolinski re-used approximately 75 percent of the existing house. This means that landfill space, energy, and natural resources—not to mention money!—were all saved in the process. Additionally, the old appliances, kitchen cabinets, and lighting and plumbing fixtures were given a chance at re-use: they were all donated to Habitat for Humanity's Re-store program.

Ossolinski worked with Emo Energy Solutions of Falls Church to provide energy modeling for the project. As it happened, the house already had a new, high-efficiency furnace, which, in concert with increased insulation, proved sufficient even after the living quarters were expanded by



Courtesy of Ossolinski Architects, PLLC

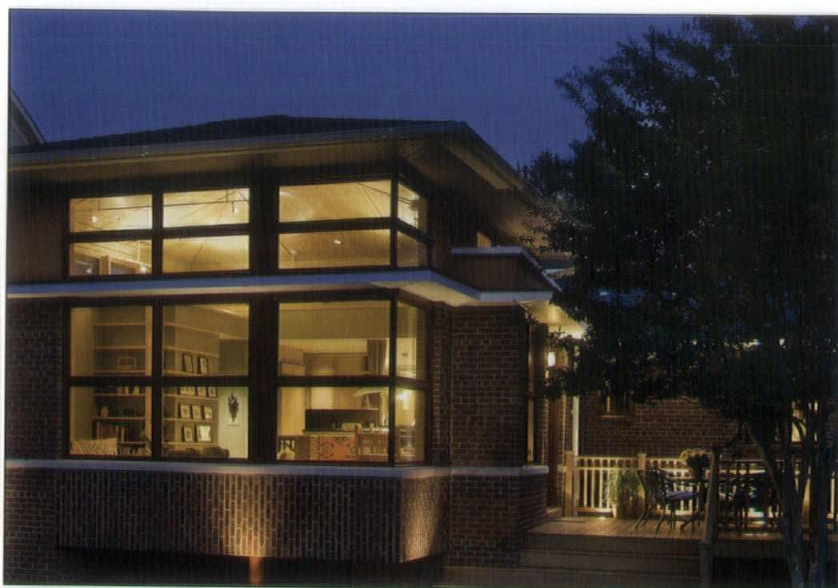


Courtesy of Ossolinski Architects, PLLC



Courtesy of Ossolinski Architects, PLLC

Photo by Morgan Howarth



Rear of the house after renovation.

Photo © Paul Burk Photography



Family room after renovation.

Photo © Paul Burk Photography

Inset Photos: Plan of the house as renovated; front and rear of the house before renovation.

20 percent. Other energy-saving additions include a high-efficiency water heater, windows and skylights that reduce the need for artificial electric light, and operable clerestory windows that allow for the natural dissipation of heat.

In addition to their recycling and energy-saving efforts, the architects were very careful to use products manufactured with renewable, reused, or sustainably harvested materials. They used linoleum made from hair and jute, a soft vegetable fiber that can be spun into coarse, strong threads. The 2x4 studs and the wood used for the windows and the new deck are all certified by the Forest Stewardship Council, an organization that monitors the growth and harvesting of wood in an environmentally conscious manner. The gypsum drywall used for this renovation was made with flue gas desulfurization (FGD) gypsum, a byproduct of manufacturing, thus reducing the need for raw materials.

And no green building strategy would be complete without considering the health of the future occupants. In an effort to create a healthful environment in their clients' home, Ossolinski Architects included air purifiers and water filters in the renovation. To minimize off-gassing after occupancy, only low-VOC paints and formaldehyde-free insulation were used. Finally, several plumbing fixtures were specially glazed to prevent the growth of bacteria.

Conserving and recycling materials, saving energy, using renewable and sustainably harvested resources, and creating a healthful interior environment were all techniques employed by Ossolinski Architects to achieve their green goals. And in a neighborhood where huge houses abound, this project stands as excellent proof that small (and green!) is, in fact, beautiful. 🌱

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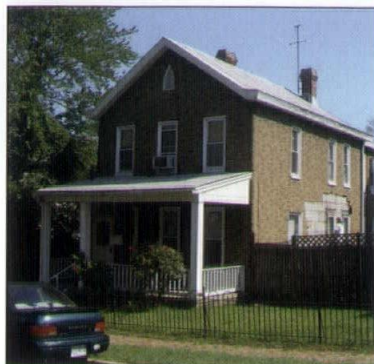


Photo courtesy of the
DC Historic Preservation Office

Above: House before restoration of porch.
Right: Porch after restoration.



Photo courtesy of the
DC Historic Preservation Office

Introducing Project Front Porch

by Beth Judy

Many Washington neighborhoods have been designated as Historic Districts to protect their fundamental character. Despite these protections, however, homeowners in such areas sometimes embark on "improvements" or renovations—often with the best of intentions—that can obscure or alter original details of their historic houses. The Washington Architectural Foundation hopes to address this problem through a new program called **Project Front Porch**. Under the leadership of foundation board member **Ralph Cunningham, AIA**, architect volunteers will provide *pro bono* drawings and detailed specifications showing owners how to restore, rather than replace, porches, windows, columns, cornices, and other exterior building features. The program is open to residents who are applying to the District of Columbia's Historic Homeowner Grant Program, administered through the DC Historic Preservation Office in the Office of Planning. Grants are offered in 12 designated Historic Districts and are awarded based on a number of factors including financial need. Project Front Porch volunteers will assist homeowners by preparing drawings required to obtain permits for work conforming to grant guidelines. Michael Lee Beidler, senior preservation specialist for the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office, hailed the initiative as "a terrific complementary program to supplement the needs of the Historic Homeowner Grant Program's low- and middle-income homeowners in this noble restoration effort."

The first round of projects are located in Anacostia and volunteers from the firms of **Cunningham | Quill, Barnes Vanze Architects**,

HOK, Oehrlein & Associates Architects, and **Smith Group** are helping four homeowners with drawings for a front portico, front porch restoration and details, and porch columns. One homeowner discovered a "shadow porch"—remnants of an earlier structure—during the course of renovation, which will help foundation volunteers to provide specifications for restoring the original porch.

"This is a great example of what architects can do to improve our community," said Ralph Cunningham.

The Washington Architectural Foundation was established by the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1988 with a mission of "architects serving the community." Project Front Porch is an extension of the foundation's **Community Design Services (CDS)** program, which provides *pro bono* design services to qualifying nonprofit organizations. Other foundation initiatives include the signature K-12 curriculum-enrichment program **Architecture in the Schools (AIS)**, and the creative, design-build food drive **CANstruction**, which benefits the Capital Area Food Bank. For more information visit the Washington Architectural Foundation website www.wafonline.org or call 202.667.5444.

To find out more about the Historic Homeowners Grant Program, call the DC Office of Historic Preservation at 202.442.7600 or visit the Office of Planning's website at www.planning.dc.gov.

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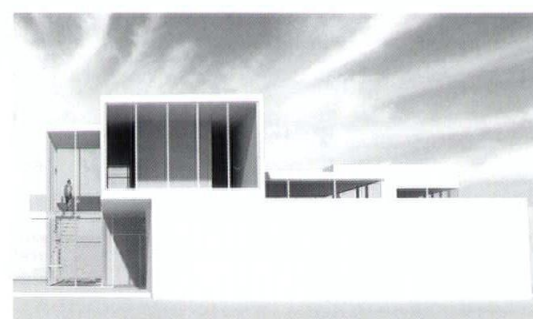
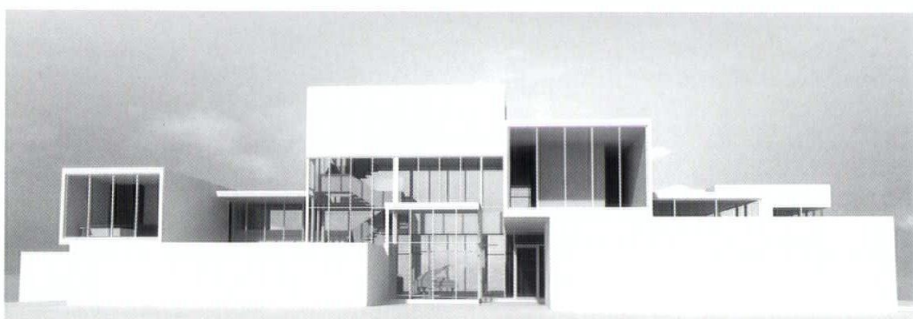
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Better by Half:

David Jameson, FAIA, Adapts a New Home Design for a Changed Economy

by Ronald O'Rourke



Renderings of the 1.0 version of the house (at left) and the .5 version (at right).

When **ARCHITECTUREDC** asked area architects for examples of projects that illustrate how their work has been affected by the recent downturn in the economy, Alexandria-based architect **David Jameson, FAIA**, submitted the “.5/1.0 House,” a design for a new home that, as the name suggests, had to be reduced in size by half due to the recession’s effect on the clients’ financial resources.

The .5/1.0 House is located in Comas, Maryland, in Montgomery County, at the base of Sugarloaf Mountain, on undulating, pastoral land dotted with older agrarian structures. The clients are a professional couple in their late 30s who also own an urban row house in DC’s Columbia Heights neighborhood.

The property in Comas has been in the wife’s family for many years. “The farm that the house is on is actually owned by the wife’s family, who are descendants of Walter ‘Big Train’ Johnson,” the famed early-20th-century pitcher for the Washington Senators, Jameson said in an interview. “So the project is a continuation of being a steward of the land for her and her family.”

The couple asked Jameson to design a home for themselves, their two children, and the husband’s mother, who had recently relocated from northern California to live with the family. The program called for a house with separate bedrooms for each of the children, a suite for the grandmother that included a bedroom, bath, and sewing room, two additional bedrooms for guests, and some additional living and play spaces.

“The design program was formulated from their desire to create a long-term residence that his mother could live at full time, and [from which] the husband and wife could commute back and

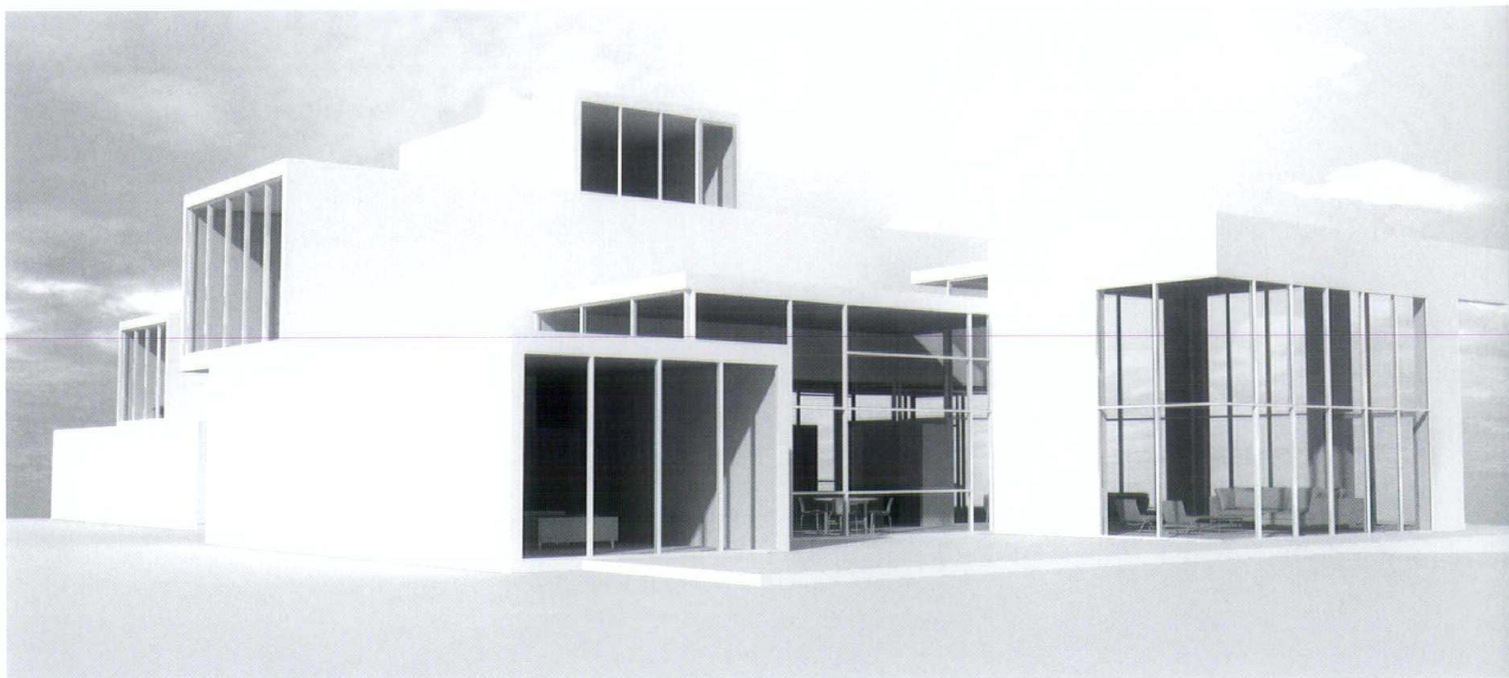
forth to [their] row house,” Jameson said. “It was an interesting program paradigm in the sense that it was really designed to be three separate houses—one that functions for the mother by itself, one that functions for the [rest of] the family by itself, and an interstitial, in-between space, where the mother in her retirement can also live in the same space with her son and his family.”

Jameson’s design for the home uses tube-like modules—or “cartridges,” as he calls them—that contain many of the home’s private living spaces. The cartridges are stacked in various relationships to one another, and the resulting spaces in between the cartridges are used to define the home’s glass-enclosed public living spaces.

The scheme, Jameson said, recalls the arrangement of older agrarian buildings in the area. “The project develops its design ideology in formulating the in-between space—the space between agrarian buildings. As many agrarian buildings are much smaller-scale, the composition of buildings is less important than the in-between space. That’s where this project came from.”

Although the computer illustrations printed here suggest an all-white house, the cartridges in fact are to be clad in cypress boards that will be scorched with roofing torches and then scraped down a bit, to give them a black-brown-silvery-grey patina. The dark coloring of the burnt siding, Jameson says, recalls the darker colors of older buildings in the area, some of which got that way through fires that blackened their outsides.

Torching the wood also has a practical value, Jameson said, because it creates a protective crust that will add to the building’s



Renderings of the 1.0 version of the house (this page) and the .5 version (opposite).

durability against the elements. “The idea was to build a maintenance-free house that was still of authentic materiality—that was something that might be found in a rural landscape.”

The resulting design for the house was a dynamically balanced arrangement of rectangular volumes on three levels with a total of 7,000 square feet and a carefully thought-through arrangement of functions and spaces.

And then the economy went south, significantly reducing the clients’ available cash for the project.

Rather than tearing up the design and starting over, Jameson determined that the home’s arrangement allowed the design to be reduced in size by about 50% relatively easily, and without compromising its core functionality, by eliminating the western half of the building and making relatively minor changes to the remaining eastern half, which contains the kitchen, dining room, living room, master suite, and mother-in-law suite.

Jameson designed a new stair hall to replace the one that was in the eastern half, and converted a sitting space in the master suite into a replacement bedroom for the two children. Sliding pocket doors were added to the master suite to section off the master bedroom and the new children’s bedroom. The space in between, which was originally designed as the master closet/dressing area and master bath, was converted into a communal clothing and bath zone shared by the parents and their kids—an arrangement that can be found in some European homes. In another acceptable compromise, the bathroom in the mother-in-law suite took on a second role as the home’s first-floor powder room.

“They made the decision,” Jameson said, “that everyone can share in the master bath, and everyone can put their clothes in the master closet. And rather than trying to radically reconfigure the house at some point in

the distant future, why not design it now as a more communal living element?”

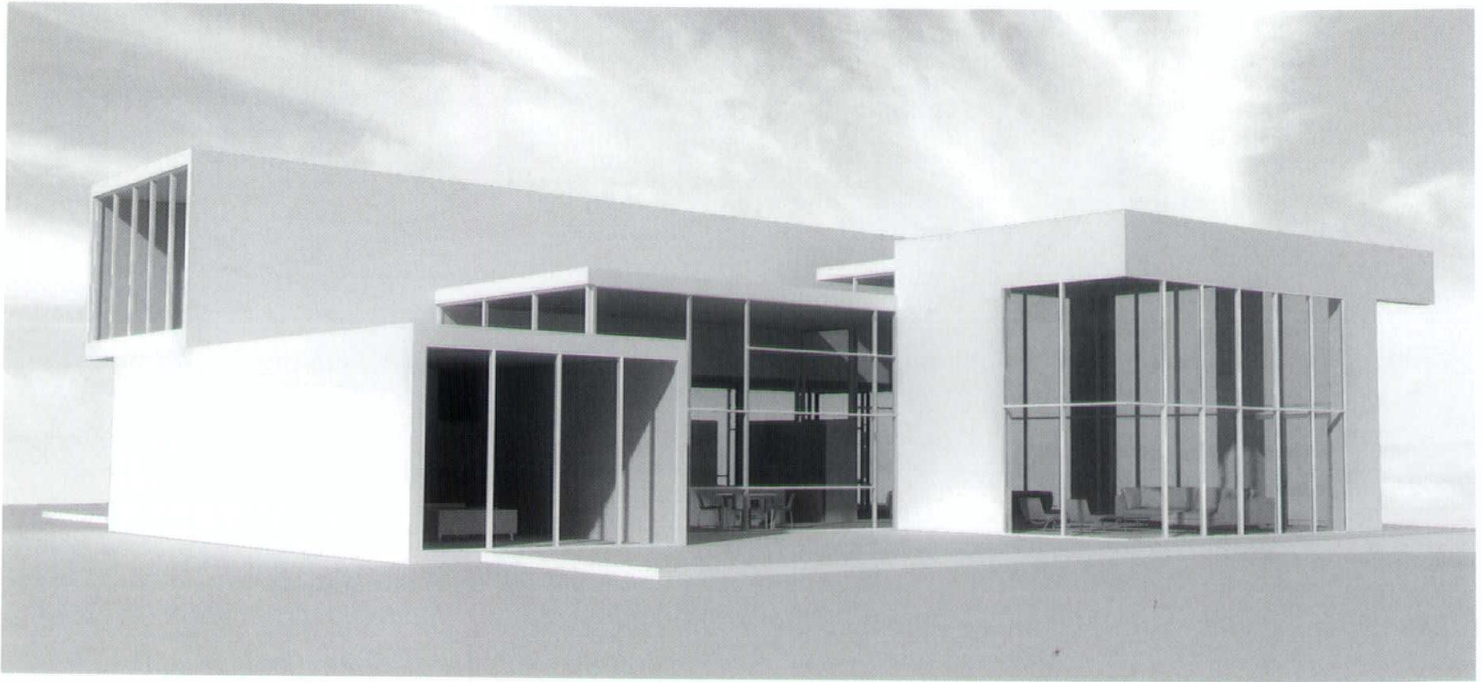
The modified design is a 3,500-square-foot, three-bedroom, two-bath home on two levels. Although the house’s square footage was reduced by about 50%, Jameson estimates that its construction cost was reduced by roughly 40%, because it retains certain expensive spaces, such as the kitchen.

“What’s interesting about this is that as the economy has lessened in strength, the design ideology of the project has not changed at all,” Jameson added. “We just repositioned the project as a smaller, more curated version of the larger composition.”

The home is called .5/1.0, and not 1.0/5, in part because Jameson’s modified design preserves the option for some day building the house out to its full size. Jameson designed the new stair hall so that it could be converted fairly easily, with minimal tear down and waste, back into the connection point to the home’s eastern half. “I would almost frame [the idea] as unhinging the space rather than necessarily tearing it down,” he said, “because we’re not looking at anything having to be pulled apart in a destructive manner.”

“The idea of .5/1.0 can be read in many different ways,” Jameson said. “One is that the house is approximately half the scale of the [original] scheme. Or, this [house] is half of their life, which is in the country, and the other .5 is their current row house in city. And at some point, when they make the decision to move full time to the base of the mountain, that it will become 1.0.”

Jameson went further, saying that the modular concept underlying the home’s design could permit a future owner with a very large family (or an institution of some kind, such as a school), to expand the building beyond its originally designed size, converting the property into what Jameson called a 2.0 version.



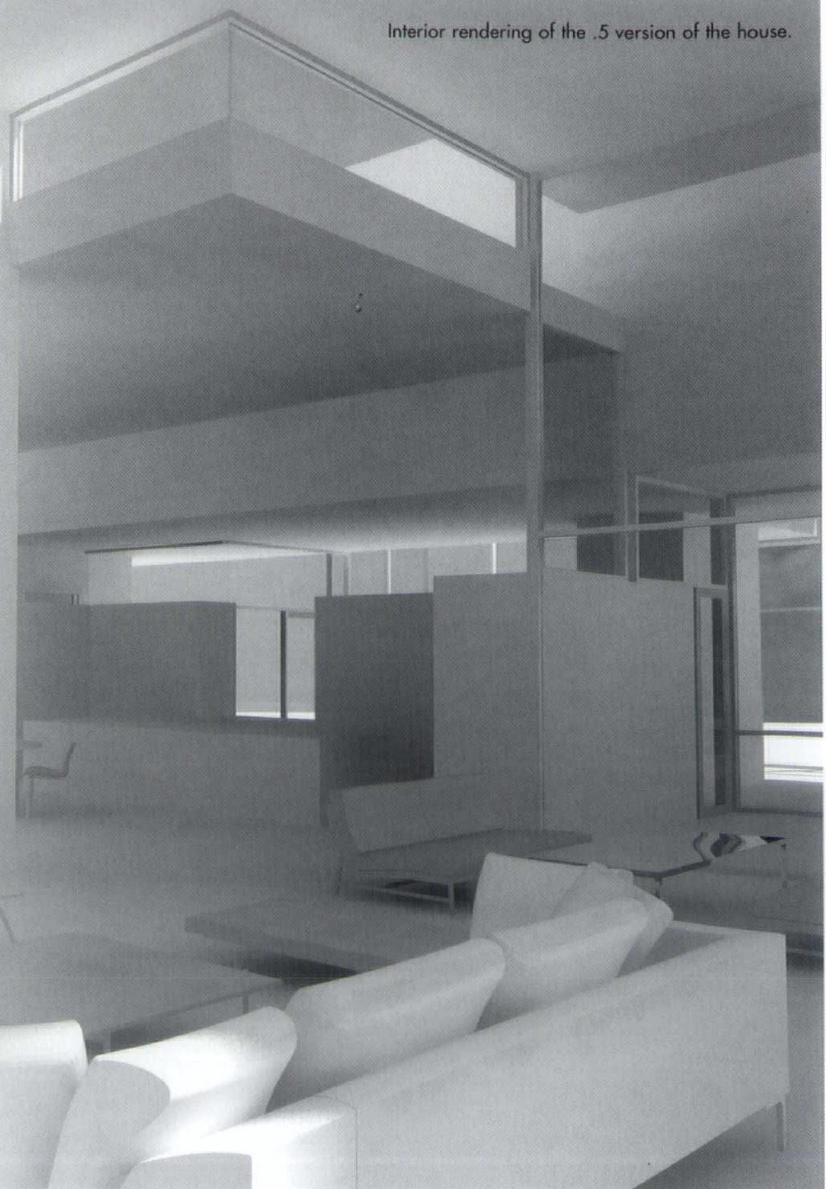
"The building can reinvent itself, and can also retract on itself in a manner that's still compelling," Jameson added. He compared the approach for the home's design to that taken by the 20th-century Finnish-American architect Eero Saarinen for the main terminal building at Dulles airport, which was built to a relatively modest initial size but was given a potential (that was eventually used) for being expanded along its length as use of the airport increased.

The .5/1.0 House, Jameson said, is an example of how a change in economic circumstances can prompt a reexamination of family life patterns and space needs. "This was a project that was originally part of the frenzy of the world two years ago—we first started working on it a year and a half ago," he said. "And I think that the reconditioning of the economy has led people to interrogate their lifestyle and understand that perhaps they can get by with less, at least in the short term."

"One trend that's becoming revealed in our work over the last few months—since late-2008/early-2009—is that the market's repositioning itself," Jameson added. "We're still getting calls for work, but the projects are not just with a smaller construction budget. It's not like someone's calling and saying, 'Hey, we want that same 2,000-square-foot project for the cost of a 1,000-square-foot project a year ago.' [Instead,] they're reinventing the way that they live, or rethinking the way that they live and saying, 'We can perhaps live in a different manner.' My wife and I are the same way—we're now contemplating buying bunk beds for our kids, so that we can have the need for less space in a house."

"On one level or another, there's nothing important about having a large house," Jameson concluded. "Having a smaller house that's well mannered and crafted in a way that's more enduring is a far better investment." Construction on the .5 version of the home is scheduled to start in October. 🏠

Interior rendering of the .5 version of the house.





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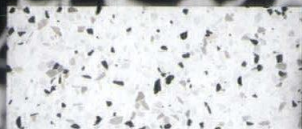
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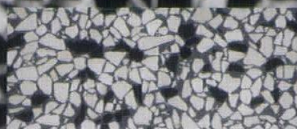
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